

# Charter

## OF THE

# NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION

VICTORIA, by the grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, to all to whom these presents shall come GREETING:

WHEREAS an humble petition has been presented to us in our Council by Field Marshal His Royal Highness Prince George William Frederick Charles Duke of Cambridge, K.G.; the Most Noble Hugh Lupus Duke of Westminster, K.G.; the Right Honourable Francis Charteris, Earl of Wemyss and March; the Right Honourable John Poyntz Earl Spencer, K.G.; the Right Honourable Robert James Baron Wantage, V.C., K.C.B.; and others of our loving subjects, setting forth (among other things) that in the year 1860, an Association, called the National Rifle Association, was formed for the purpose of giving permanence to Volunteer Corps, Naval and Military, and to encourage rifle shooting throughout our dominions, and that such Association has continued in existence to the present time, and has annually held a meeting for prize shooting, and comprises a large number of Members, and is in connection with a large number of Rifle Associations in Great Britain, Ireland, India, and the Colonies. And also setting forth that it is desirable that the said Association be formed into a corporate body by the name of the National Rifle Association, and may thereby be enabled to acquire and hold land, and that our said Petitioners believe that it would tend greatly to promote the objects for which the said Association was formed, and is being carried on, if a charter of incorporation were granted to the said Association.

Now KNOW YE that we, being desirous of promoting and encouraging rifle shooting throughout our dominions, have of our special grace certain knowledge and mere motion given and granted, and we do hereby GIVE and GRANT that the said Field Marshal His Royal Highness Prince George William Frederick Charles Duke of Cambridge, Hugh Lupus Duke of Westminster, Francis Charteris Earl of Wemyss and March, John Poyntz Earl Spencer, and the several other persons named in the second part of the first Schedule hereto, as Members of the Council, and such others of our loving subjects as are now registered Members of the said Association, and their successors, who shall at any time hereafter become Members of the Corporation established by this our Charter, under or according to the provisions of these presents, shall be, and are hereby created and constituted a body politic and corporate for the purposes aforesaid, by the name of "The National Rifle Association," with perpetual succession and a Common Seal, with power to sue and be sued in their said corporate name, and to acquire and to hold lands for the purposes of the said Association without license in mortmain, and WE DO HEREBY GRANT OUR LICENSE unto all and every person and persons, bodies politic and corporate (otherwise competent) to grant, sell, alien and convey in mortmain unto and to the use of the said Association, and their successors, any messuages, lands, tenements or hereditaments for the purposes of the said Association. AND OUR WILL AND PLEASURE is, and we further grant and declare that there shall be a General Meeting of the Members of the said body corporate to be held from time to time as hereinafter mentioned, and that there shall always be a Council to direct and manage the concerns of the said body corporate, and that there shall be a Patron, a President, Vice-Presidents, a Chairman of Council, and a Treasurer, and that the direction and management of the said body corporate shall be subject to the rules contained in the second Schedule hereto, or other the rules of the said Corporation which may for the time being be in force under the authority of this our Charter. AND WE DO HEREBY ALSO GRANT AND DECLARE that the Council shall consist of the President, the Treasurer,

and other Members of the Corporation to the number of thirty, or to such other number as the rules for the time being of the said Corporation shall direct, and that the first Patron shall be His Royal Highness Albert Edward Prince of Wales, K.G., and that the first President shall be Field Marshal His Royal Highness Prince George William Frederick Charles, Duke of Cambridge, and that the first Vice-Presidents shall be the persons named in the first part of the first Schedule hereto, and that the first Chairman of Council shall be the Right Honourable Lord Wantage, V.C., K.C.B., and that the first Treasurer shall be the Right Honourable Arthur Fitzgerald Lord Kinnaird, and that the thirty Members of Council shall be the persons named in the second part of the first Schedule hereto. AND WE DO HEREBY FURTHER GRANT AND DECLARE that the Council shall, subject to these presents, have the entire management of the property and funds of the Corporation, and the direction of all the affairs and concerns of the Corporation, and, in particular, the Council shall have power to purchase or otherwise acquire on behalf of the Corporation lands and tenements and other property, to erect and maintain buildings required for the purposes of the Corporation, and to dispose, by sale, exchange or otherwise, of any lands, tenements, or other property of which the Corporation may become possessed; also to borrow money for the purposes of the Corporation on the security of the property of the Corporation or any part thereof or otherwise. AND WE DO HEREBY FURTHER GRANT AND DECLARE that it shall be lawful for the Members of the Corporation in General Meeting to alter or revoke any of the said rules, or other the rules for the time being of the Corporation, and to make such new and other rules with respect to the qualification, privileges, admission, and a motion of Members, the appointment, emoluments, and tenure of office of the officers and servants of the Corporation, and with respect to any other of the matters contained in the said scheduled Rules, and generally for regulating the affairs, property, business and interests of the Corporation, and for carrying out the objects of the Corporation. Provided that no such altered, new, or other rule shall be repugnant to these presents or to the laws and statutes of this our realm, and that if any rule so repugnant as aforesaid shall be made, such rule shall be void. IN WITNESS whereof we have caused these our Letters to be made Patent. Witness Ourselves at Westminster, the 25th day of November, in the fifty-fourth year of our Reign.

# FIRST SCHEDULE.

## PART I.

### *Vice-Presidents.*

H.H. The Maharajah of Vizianagram.  
Duke of Westminster, K.G.  
Marquis of Lansdowne, G.C.M.G.  
Marquis of Ripon, K.G., G.C.S.I.  
Earl Cowper, K.G.  
Earl Ducie.  
Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, K.P., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.S.I.  
Earl of Eldon.  
Earl of Leicester, K.G.  
Earl of Pembroke.  
Earl of Sefton, K.G.  
Earl Spencer, K.G.  
Earl Stanhope.  
Earl of Tankerville.  
Viscount Cranbrook, G.C.S.I.  
Viscount Hardinge, A.D.C.  
Lord Bateman.  
Col. Right Hon. Sydney North.  
Sir Thomas Fairbairn, Baronet.  
Sir Henry Peek, Baronet.  
Major-General Boxer, R.A.  
The Lord Advocate.  
The Lord Mayor of London.  
The Lord Provost of Edinburgh.  
The Lord Mayor of Dublin.  
The General Officer for the time being Commanding the Aldershot Division.  
The General Officer for the time being Commanding the Home Division.  
J.A. Mullens, Esq.  
H. Phillips, Esq.  
E.L. Pryse, Esq.  
Colonel Harrison Trent Stoughton.  
Colonel Stanley G. Bird.  
Captain E. St. John Mildmay.

## PART II.

### *Members of Council.*

Duke of Westminster, K.G.  
Brig.-General Right Hon J.H.A. Macdonald, C.B.  
Lieut.-Col. W. Marsden.  
Col. Viscount Bury, K.C.M.G., A.D.C.  
Brig.-General Lord Wantage, K.C.B., V.C.  
Colonel Alexander Wilson.  
Gen. Sir W. McMurdo, K.C.B.  
Earl of Lathom.  
Major-Gen. Philip Smith, C.B.  
Earl Waldegrave.  
Earl Spencer, K.G.  
Major S. Flood Page.  
G.T. Biddulph, Esq.  
Earl of Pembroke.  
Major C.B. Waller.  
Col. Sir Henry Fletcher, Bart., M.P.  
Lieut.-Col. Sir W.H. Walrond, Bart., M.P.  
Earl Brownlow.  
Henry Whitehead, Esq.  
Lieut.-Gen. Sir Evelyn Wood, K.C.M.G., K.C.B., V.C.  
Earl of Wemyss.  
Major R.H. Knox, C.B.  
Captain Stewart Pixley.  
Col. Hon. Algernon Egerton.  
Col. Sir H. Halford, Bart., C.B.  
Brig.-Gen. Sir H. Wilmot, Bart., C.B., V.C.  
Colonel Burt.  
Earl Wharnccliffe.  
Martin R. Smith, Esq.  
J.A. Doyle, Esq.

## **SECOND SCHEDULE.**

### **RULES.**

#### **OBJECTS.**

I. The objects of the National Rifle Association (in these rules referred to as "the Association") are the promotion and encouragement of Rifle Shooting throughout the Queen's dominions, and to give permanence to the Volunteer Force.

#### **MEMBERS.**

II. The Corporate Members shall consist of Annual Members, Life Members, and Honorary Life Members.

III. Any person being a subscriber of one guinea per annum shall, upon his name being entered in the register, become an Annual Member of the National Rifle Association.

IV. A donor of £10. 10s. 0d. to the funds of the Association and a donor of a prize or prizes of the value of not less than £20 to be competed for at the Annual Prize Meeting shall, upon his name being entered in the register become a Life Member of the Association.

V. Every Volunteer duly enrolled, being the donor of £5. 5s. 0d. shall upon his name being entered in the register become a Life Member, or being a subscriber of 10s. per annum shall upon his name being entered in the register become an Annual Member of the Association. The term Volunteer in these rules shall include Yeomanry Cavalry.

VI. Any Member of a County Rifle Association who shall contribute 10s. annually through such Association shall upon his or her name being entered in the register become an Annual Member of the National Rifle Association.

VII. Every Local Rifle Association, whether in the United Kingdom, India, or the Colonies, subscribing not less than £5 per annum to the funds of the Association shall be entitled to a number of Memberships in the proportion of one to every 10s. thus subscribed. Such Local Association shall elect from its Members the persons to hold for the time being such Memberships and return their names and addresses when elected to the Secretary of the Association to be registered by him, and such persons shall, upon their names being entered in the register, become Annual Members of the National Rifle Association.

VIII. There shall be a register of Members in which shall be inserted the name and address of each Member, the date of his or her registration as a Member, and any other particulars as the Council may from time to time direct. The register shall be kept under the superintendence of the Secretary.

IX. The admission of any person as a Member of the Association, notwithstanding his or her being duly qualified as aforesaid, shall be subject to the approval of the Council.

X. The Council may from time to time nominate any number of persons to be Honorary Life Members of the Association. Honorary Life Members of the Association may also be elected at the Winter General Meeting of the Association on motion duly proposed and seconded.

XI. Subscriptions shall be due on the 1st of January in each year. Any person becoming a Member of the Association shall continue to be a Member and be liable for his or her subscription until the 1st of January next succeeding the time when he or she shall give notice in writing to the Secretary of his or her intention to withdraw from the Association, or until his or her subscription shall be in arrear for one whole year, in which case his or her name may be struck off the Register of Members, but any Member whose name shall be so struck off shall be liable for all subscriptions in arrear at the time.

#### **THE PATRON.**

XII. There shall be a Patron to be named by the Council.

#### **OFFICERS.**

XIII. The officers of the Association shall be a President, thirty Vice-Presidents (exclusive of *ex-officio* Vice-Presidents), a Treasurer, thirty ordinary Members of Council, of whom one shall be Chairman, a Secretary and an Auditor.

XIV. The President and the Vice-Presidents shall be annually elected, and the vacancies in the Council shall be filled up at the Winter General Meeting. The Auditor for the year shall be annually elected at the Winter General Meeting. Should vacancies in any of these offices occur by death, resignation or otherwise between the Winter General Meetings, the Council shall have power to fill up such vacancies, subject to confirmation and approval at the subsequent Winter General Meeting.

XV. The Lord Mayor of the City of London for the time being, the Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh for the time being, the Lord Mayor of the City of Dublin for the time being, Lords-Lieutenants of Counties being Members of the Association, the General Officer for the time being Commanding the Aldershot Division, and the General Officer for the time being Commanding the Home Division shall be *ex-officio* Vice-Presidents.

XVI. The Treasurer and the Secretary shall be appointed by the Council and removable at the pleasure of the Council. The Council may at any time appoint either an Honorary Secretary or an Assistant Secretary, or both, and may pay to the Secretary and to any Assistant Secretary such salaries as may appear to the Council to be fitting. Clerks may likewise be appointed and paid, and offices may be taken at the discretion of the Council.

XVII. The Council may invite gentlemen of influence in different parts of the country to act as Honorary Secretaries, and may appoint them accordingly.

#### **THE COUNCIL.**

XVIII. The Council shall consist of the President, the Treasurer and thirty ordinary Members. Five Members of the Council shall be a quorum.

XIX. At the Winter General Meeting of the Association to be held in the year 1891 and in every succeeding year one-third of the ordinary Members of the Council shall

retire from office, but any Member so retiring shall be eligible for reelection. The vacancies in the Council by retirement, death or resignation, shall be filled up by the Members of the Association present at the Winter General Meeting.

The ten persons whose names are first given in the second part of the First Schedule to the Charter, shall retire at the Winter General Meeting of 1891, the ten whose names are secondly there given shall retire at the Winter General Meeting of 1892. At every subsequent Winter General Meeting the ten Members of the Council who have been longest in office shall retire.

Any person chosen by the Council to fill up a casual vacancy shall retain his office so long only as the vacating Member would have retained the same had he not vacated his office.

The Council may act notwithstanding any vacancies for the time being existing in their body.

XX. The Chairman of the Council shall be chosen by the Council, and shall hold office for one year.

XXI. The Council shall appoint one of their number to act as Vice-Chairman, who shall hold office for one year.

XXII. The Council shall have the entire management of the property and funds of the Association, and the direction of all the affairs and concerns of the Association, and shall have power to purchase or otherwise acquire on behalf of the Association lands and tenements and other property, to erect and maintain buildings required for the purposes of the Association, and to dispose by sale, exchange or otherwise, of the property of which the Association may become possessed. The Council shall also have power to borrow money for the purposes of the Association on the security of the property of the Association or any part thereof, or otherwise and generally the Council may do all such acts and deeds as shall appear to them necessary or expedient to be done for the purpose of carrying into effect the objects of the Association.

XXIII. The Council shall have power to make such byelaws with respect to the summoning, notice, place, management and adjournment of their Meetings, and generally with respect to the transaction and management of business by the Council or by any Committee of the Council as they may think fit, no byelaw being in any case altered or new one proposed within at least one month's notice of such intention being given to each Member of the Council.

XXIV. The Council shall have power from time to time to appoint Committees of its Members, and to delegate to such Committees respectively any power or business as the Council may think fit.

XXV. The President or, in his absence, the Chairman of the Council, or, in the absence of both, the Vice-Chairman of the Council shall preside at all Meetings of the Council or of any Committee thereof of which he may be a Member.

#### **GENERAL MEETINGS.**

XXVI. There shall be two General Meetings of the Association in each year held in London, on days to be fixed by the Council, of which not less than five weeks' notice shall be

given, one Meeting to be held in the month of February and to be called the Winter General Meeting, and the other in the month of May to be called the Spring General Meeting.

XXVII. Special General Meetings shall be held whenever summoned by the President or the Council or on requisition as hereinafter provided, not less than fifteen days' notice thereof being given.

XXVIII. If at any Meeting of the Association the President be not present at the time appointed for holding the same, or within a quarter of an hour afterwards, the Chairman of the Council shall preside, or failing him the Vice-Chairman, and failing both the Members present shall choose some Vice-President or Member of the Council present to preside at such Meeting.

XXIX. The Council shall present to the Winter General Meeting a report of the condition of the Association with such particulars as the Council may think requisite.

On the occasion of any such vacancies having occurred in the Council as are required to be filled by the Association in General Meeting assembled the General Meeting shall proceed to fill up such vacancies by election.

A General Meeting may transact any such business although not in these rules specially mentioned as shall be laid before them by the Council.

Ten Members shall be a quorum at any General Meeting of the Association.

If at any General Meeting of the Association ten Members are not present within an hour after the time appointed for holding the same, the Meeting shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week, and if at such adjourned Meeting ten Members are not present within an hour after the time appointed for holding the Meeting, the Meeting shall stand adjourned *sine die*.

Every Member of the Association present at the General Meeting and who shall have been for a period of at least six months immediately preceding registered as a Member of the Association, shall be entitled to one vote and no more, with this exception, that if at any Meeting, or upon the taking of a Poll, the number of votes given against and in favour of any matter are equal the person presiding may give a second or casting vote.

All questions for the decision of a General Meeting having been put by the Chairman of such Meeting in the form of a motion duly proposed and seconded shall be determined by a show of hands, the result to be declared by the Chairman.

If after any question has been so put to the Meeting a Poll be thereupon demanded by not less than twelve Members present at such Meeting and competent to vote - the same question shall be submitted to all the Members of the Association competent to vote, whether present at such Meeting or not, and shall be determined by the result of their votes given in writing, for which purpose the Chairman shall sign the form of the question upon which the Poll is demanded, and such question shall be printed and forwarded by post by the Secretary to each Member, accompanied by a voting paper to be signed by the Member and returned to the Secretary within seven days after the date of the same being posted from the office of the Association, and any vote not received at the office within that time shall not be counted. The result of the Poll shall be ascertained by two scrutineers to be named at the General Meeting, one by the Member moving the question on which the Poll is demanded, the other by the Council, and such result shall be declared on the day fixed for the adjournment of the General Meeting at such adjourned Meeting.



For the purpose of a Poll and of any notices to be given to the Members it shall be sufficient if the voting paper or notice be sent by post to the address of such Member as registered at the office of the Association.

XXX. The Council shall convene a Special General Meeting on the written requisition of any fifty Members of the Association within twenty-eight days from the date of the receipt of such requisition. Such requisition shall state the particular object of and business to be transacted at such Meeting, notice of which shall be given not less than fifteen days prior to the date on which such Meeting is to be held.

The proceedings at a Special General Meeting shall be regulated according to those hereinbefore provided for an Ordinary General Meeting except that no business shall be transacted at a Special General Meeting other than that for which it shall have been convened.

XXXI. The Council shall fix the place of all Meetings whether Ordinary or Special.

### SHOOTING COMPETITIONS.

XXXII. There shall be Meetings for shooting at such times and in such places as shall be deemed by the Council most advantageous to the advancement of the objects of the Association.

Announcement shall be made by the Council from time to time of the date and place of any Meeting for shooting competition proposed to be held in the ensuing year.

There shall be such prizes open to such persons or classes of persons as competitors, and on such terms and on payment of such entrance fees as may be fixed by the Council from time to time, and all matters connected with the competition for such prizes shall be in the discretion of the Council.

The Council shall have power to make and enforce regulations for the conduct of Meetings for shooting competition, or to be observed by persons attending the same.

XXXIII. County Rifle Associations in connection with the National Rifle Association shall be annually entitled to the bronze medals of the National Rifle Association to be competed for by the Volunteers of the County at the Annual Prize Meeting of such County Rifle Association. Where any County in connection with the National Rifle Association contains over 5,000 efficient Volunteers, such County shall be entitled to bronze medals of the National Rifle Association in the following proportions:

Counties having from				
5,000 to 10,000	.	.	Two	bronze Medals.
10,000 to 15,000	.	.	Three	„ „
15,000 to 20,000	.	.	Four	„ „
20,000 to 25,000	.	.	Five	„ „
25,000 to 30,000	.	.	Six	„ „
30,000 to 35,000	.	.	Seven	„ „

And so on in the same proportion from 35,000 provided the County contributes annually to the National Rifle Association a sum of not less than £5 in 10s. Memberships in respect of each bronze medal to which it shall be entitled, and the Rifle Association of the County shall make such arrangements either by sub-division of the County or otherwise, as it shall think fit; for the competition for such medals.

XXXIV. The Irish, Indian and Colonial Rifle Associations in connection with the National Rifle Association shall be annually entitled to the silver medal of the National Rifle Association, to be competed for at the Annual Prize Meetings of such Associations.

XXXV. The winner of a National Rifle Association silver or bronze medal or medals shall be entitled to compete once at the Prize Meeting of the National Rifle Association for His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales' Prize in respect of each medal won by him, but he cannot compete more than once in each year.

XXXVI. Where Counties, Indian Provinces or Colonies combine to form a Rifle Association, each County, Province or Colony forming part of such Association, and contributing annually to the National Rifle Association a sum of not less than £5 in 10s. Memberships, shall receive the medal of the National Rifle Association as per Rules XXXIII. and XXXIV.

#### **REPORT.**

XXXVII. An Annual Report, embracing the audited account of the Finances, shall be drawn up under the direction of the Council and shall be issued to the Members, the same to be also rendered to the yearly Winter General Meeting.

#### **ADVERTISEMENTS.**

XXXVIII. All notices of Meetings and other notices required to be given to the Members generally shall be in the form of public advertisement inserted in the "Volunteer Service Gazette," or such other newspaper as the Council may from time to time determine.

XXXIX. The above Rules shall not be altered or added to except by a special resolution passed at a General Meeting.

A resolution of the Association shall be deemed to be special which has been duly passed at the Winter General Meeting of the Association, or some adjournment thereof, or at a Special General Meeting, and no such resolution shall be proposed unless a notice in writing of the terms of such resolution signed by two Members qualified to vote as proposer and seconder thereof shall have been given to the Secretary of the Council, or sent to him by registered post, so as to reach the office of the Association not less than twenty-eight days previous to the Winter General Meeting or the Special General Meeting as the case may be. The Council shall cause notice to be given of all such proposed resolutions by two advertisements, such as hereinbefore mentioned, the first to be inserted at least eighteen days previous to such General Meeting. No substantial amendment to such resolution shall be adopted unless a notice in writing of the terms of such amendment, signed by two Members qualified to vote as proposer and seconder thereof, shall have been given to the Secretary or sent to him by registered post so as to reach the office of the Association not less than ten days previous to such General Meeting. The Council shall cause all such proposed amendments to be advertised at least once previous to such General Meeting; Provided that any amendment to such resolution if carried unanimously may be adopted, although no previous notice thereof shall have been given.

By Warrant under the Queen's Sign Manual,

MUIR MACKENZIE.