

The Yeoman Warders

A trip to London is never complete without a visit to the Tower of London. The Yeoman Warders, or 'Beefeaters', guard the Tower.

King Henry VIII first introduced Beefeaters in 145. They were his bodyguards. They looked after the prisoners in the Tower and guarded the Crown Jewels. These days they guide the tourists who visit the Tower. They also take care of the eight big black ravens which live in the Tower.

There are 36 Yeoman Warders. They all live in the Tower with their families. The Beefeaters are famous for their red and gold uniform, but they only wear this on formal occasions. Most of the time they wear a dark blue uniform with red trimmings.

No one is exactly sure where the name 'Beefeaters' comes from. One theory is that the warders got meat instead of money as a salary! Others say that the name comes from the French word *buffetier*. Buffetiers were the guards in the palace of the French king. They protected the king's food.

Questions:

1. What do the 'Beefeaters' do these days?
2. What does the word 'trimming' mean?