

Big Sam

The 1st Battalion returned to Ireland in November 1783 and remained there until 1790. During this time 'Big Sam' became a regimental legend. At 6 feet 10 inches tall and 48 inches around the chest he was as strong as an ox.

"Being placed on sentry over a piece of ordnance, he suddenly appeared in the guard room with it over his shoulder, remarking: 'What's the use of standing out on a cold night, watching that bit of iron. I can watch it as well in here'.

Asked by a comrade to fetch a loaf down from a high shelf, he took the man by the neck and holding him up at arms length, said: 'Tak it doon yersel'.

In Dublin, being twitted about his strength, he made no reply, till the butcher, pointing to a large carcass, said, 'It is yours if you could carry it home.'

Sam, thinking of his comrades, shouldered it, and carried it two miles back to Richmond Barracks."

Memorable Medals

Lieutenant Colonel AHC Hope OBE TD

Arthur Hope was in the air in balloons during the First World War in France. He then joined the 4th/5th Battalion The Royal Scots, rising to command them. In WW2 he was officer in charge of troopships crossing the Atlantic. So he has the WWI medals, the Territorial Decoration with four bars and the WWII medals, which includes the Atlantic Star, rare for a soldier. He served on land, sea and the air in both World Wars. Arthur was the oldest Royal Scot (87) on parade for the Regiment's 350th anniversary in 1983 where he was pushed in a wheel chair the length of Princes Street by a soldier from the 1st Battalion. His son, Lord David Hope QC, Scotland's senior Law Lord, presented his medals to the museum and you can see them in the 4th case top right display.

Major General Sir Rohan Delacombe KDMG KCVO KBE CB DSO

Jumbo, as he was always known, also held the appointment of Knight of the Order of St John (KStJ). He was the only Royal Scot to be knighted four times. Dressed as an Archer on parade he looked every bit like a Russian General. Lt Col Jock Wilson Smith OBE

Hon James St Clair, Colonel of the Regiment 1737-1762

Born in 1688 he was an Ensign in The Royal Regiment by May 1694 aged five or six. Serving as a Captain at Malplaquet, he left for the Foot Guards in 1725, returning in June 1737 as Colonel. The Regiment was known as 'St Clair's' at Culloden in 1746. He died at Dysart in Fife on 30 November 1762.

From the United Services Gazette

November 12 1837 – 2nd Battalion ...the cold very severe, the temperature being 30 degrees below zero, or 20 degrees under the freezing-point. (they were in Canada)

November 27 1852 – funeral of the late illustrious C.-in-C. (Wellington).



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Moments in Time



November

1	1646	Archibald Douglas became Commanding Officer.
	1945	The 2 nd Battalion Colours were recovered in Singapore: "we were going along a street just behind the waterfront and main jetties, when we were attracted by colourful embroidery. We found on closer examination that it was a Regimental Colour lying amongst a pile of old clothing on a wayside vendor's barrow. I bought it for 1 dollar." <i>Capt A S Carr</i> Can you spot these same colours at the Museum display of drums?
3	1944	Assault on Flushing – in order to attack men waded through fast running floodwater that was 5 feet deep (originally estimated at no more than 18 inches). Before nightfall the same day Flushing was almost clear. The 7 th /9 th Battalion had accounted for 50 German dead, 600 prisoners. 18 Royals killed, 50 wounded.
4	1944	Attack on Middleburg by using amphibious tracked vehicles called Buffaloes. 6 Royals were killed and 6 wounded with the loss of one Buffalo.
5	1854	Battle of Inkerman, Crimea – 1 st Battalion
6	1899	27 Officers, one Warrant Officer and 1,010 NCOs and men embarked at Queenstown for The South African war
7	1919	11 th Service Battalion disbanded
9	1710	Aire surrendered – 2 nd Battalion
10	1813	Forcing of River Nivelle – 3 rd Battalion
11	1918	Armistice Day (11 th Day of the 11 th Hour of the 11 th Month) Hostilities ceased on Western Front, World War 1
12	1922	6 th Territorial Battalion disbanded
13	1916	Beaumont Hamel and Serre – 2 nd , 8 th , 9 th Battalions
15	1793	Siege of Toulon – three companies were part of a force at Fort Mulgrave attacked by Republicans – the defenders lost 61 whilst the Royals lost 1.
20	1917	Cambrai – 9 th Battalion
28	1685	Lord George Douglas re-commissioned as 'Colonel of our Royal Regiment of Foot' by James II
30	1762	St Andrew's Day General The Hon. James St Clair Colonel from 1737-1762 died
	1793	Toulon – a detachment successfully captured an artillery position but forced to retreat. 1 officer and 4 soldiers killed, 2 officers presumed dead, 3 officers and 40 soldiers wounded and 53 soldiers missing. Toulon could not be defended with only 12,000 troops from five nations when faced with an army of over 30,000. The magazine, arsenal and French ships in the port were destroyed. Lt Ironmonger of The Royals was the last to leave.

Battle Honours

Flushing 1944

DSO Major Hugh Rose: "At last we reached the start-line, but the leading company reported that the water was five feet deep and running very strongly. Captain K I M Buchanan found that his leading men were up to their shoulders in water. The Commanding Officer (CO) then directed Major Rose to take the lead and find another road. The snake-like formation continued, but we had to grip each other fairly tightly, as the water was now running at about five knots. (Major Rose organised B Company so taller members were spaced out within the column in order to help the shorter ones in the deeper water)

Lt Colonel Melville although severely wounded in the chest, survived, thanks to his Mae West, which saved him from drowning. He was rescued, whilst still under fire, by Major Rose who, on reaching him, found him 'grounded on high ground' and in amazing good spirits'. Major J G Dawson, the Second in Command, a Territorial, took over command. He remained CO until the end of the war. Major Rose took over command temporarily whilst the former had a hospital admission. Both were the only Territorials to command Royal Scots battalions on operations during the Second World War. Major Rose received the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) in Jan 1945 from Field Marshall Montgomery.

Middleburg

Attack using amphibious tracked vehicles called Buffaloes.
"Just after noon on 5 November all the available amphibious craft had been assembled and A Company of 7th/9th Battalion under the command of Major RHB Johnston, with a platoon of machine-gunners from the 7th Manchesters, and a Norwegian officer as interpreter, was tasked to seek out Lieutenant General Daser and demand the surrender of the German forces." The vehicles waddled into the water, struggled with ditches, poles, wires with booby traps, and minefields. One Buffalo was blown up by a mine, but the rest proceeded into what they thought was an empty town until they reached cheering crowds of Dutch civilians. Germans erupted onto the scene, fully armed but not hostile. With some luck, not a little guts and a little white lie about rank the German General surrendered and 40 officers and two thousand other ranks were captured. Allied losses were 6 killed, six wounded and one Buffalo. *Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard Vol II.*

Inkerman 1854

At dawn, under cover of a thick mist, a large force of Russians surprised our men holding the trenches round Sebastopol. Troops were hurried up piece-meal, and came into action by battalions or companies, without reference to higher formations. The stakes at issue were tremendous, having behind them only the sea cliffs, or the declivities leading to their narrow harbours, defeat would have been absolute and ruinous, and behind such defeat national degradation. On the other hand, when the long crisis of the day was past, the fate of Sebastopol was already decided. The Minié rifle did hideous execution among the dense formations of the enemy, but many of our regiments were still armed with the Brown Bess of Waterloo fame. 8,500 British and 7,500 French routed the repeated attacks of 40,000 Russians. *The Thistle/Norman's 'Battle Honours'.*

Death of 'Jean' the Regimental Cat

Thursday November 29th, 1923 at 4pm.

Jean was born in Barracks on June 8th, 1899. Until about five years ago Jean practically remained most of her days in the Sergeant's Mess, but in May 1918, she was transferred to the Coffee Bar, where she has been until her death. Jean was a favourite of all in the Depot, and many old comrades who have visited the Depot have gone into the Coffee Bar to see Jean. Jean has seen Her Royal Highness Princess Mary on two occasions, and many of them notable personages.

She quickly made friends with any person who came in contact with her. Immediately anyone spoke about her she would rouse herself from her usual seat at the fire and get into the midst of them, studying each one well, and after the conversation was over she would quietly slip back to her resting-place.

She was very energetic, and would run about the Coffee Bar playing with other cats until it was closed; then she would get on the table and watch the money counted out, and afterwards would partake of a good supper and then lie down on the chair, in front of the fire, her bed for the night. She had lovely large green eyes, which were very expressive. Her colour was a dark grey, tiger striped, white paws and breast. Her food mainly consisted of fish, raw steak, fresh milk, and it may be added that any food she partook of must be absolutely fresh, otherwise it remained untouched. Jean was buried in the Military Cemetery on Friday, November 30th, 1923, at 11:30pm. She was 24½ years old when she died. *The Thistle 1923 p 266*

Shipwrecked...

After 52 days travelling from Cork to Quebec in 1836, the Battalion split into two in 1843 at Toronto in order to sail to the West Indies. One half sailed on 2 October to arrive in Barbados a month later. The other half of 350 men, women and children set out from Quebec on 28 October on the ill fated transport Premier.

In the early morning of 4 November the Premier struck a rock in Cape



Chat Bay, in the Gulf of Lawrence where she struck fast. Such was the state of the sea that it took sixteen hours to ferry the passengers ashore. Despite the dangers all were saved. Lieutenant Lysons left a vivid description of how the crew and the soldiers managed to get everyone ashore and records the amazing fortitude of the

women who allowed their children to be 'tied up five or six together in blankets, like dumplings, and lowered into the boats.'

"The Canadians had brought some carts down and took the wet and shivering creatures off to their cottages to warm and dry themselves. In loading the carts a little difficulty arose, as the women could not be persuaded to take the children as they came when unpacked from the bundles, and sort them at the cottages, but each woman insisted on having her own Bobby or Biddy immediately restored to her."

Once everyone was ashore Lieutenant Lysons was despatched to Quebec, a journey of 300 miles, to report. He arrived 4 days later even though there were no roads for the first 80 miles. A steamer was immediately sent to recover the troops. The detachment returned to Quebec, where it remained until May 1844 when it sailed to Nova Scotia, travelling on to Barbados in November.

The behaviour of the survivors in the face of such hardship was commended by Queen Victoria and the Duke of Wellington.

During their time in Nova Scotia the Commanding Officer reported "I had my men on St George's Island and I believe every one of them had a fishing rod. We caught lots of good sea fish and speared lobsters by moonlight"