

Colonels of the Regiment

Sir Robert Douglas, 1691-1692

For many years the Royals had shown what they could do when fighting *for* the French, but at Steenkirque they showed how terrible they could be when fighting *against* them. Sir Robert Douglas, at the head of the 1st Battalion, led his battalion against the troops behind the first hedge, "he soon cleared it of its French defenders, and drove one of the battalions from the field in confusion. A second hedge was assailed and carried by the Scots in a few moments, a third was assaulted - the French stood their ground - the combatants fought muzzle to muzzle, but again the Royals proved victorious. The toil of conflict did not cool the ardour of the veteran Scots, but forward they rushed with a loud huzza, and attacked the troops lining the fourth hedge. Here the fighting was severe but eventually the Royals overthrew a fourth French battalion and drove a crowd of combatants from their cannon.

In this desperate conflict the battalion lost one of its three colours. Sir Robert Douglas, seeing the colour on the other side of the hedge, leaped through a gap, slew the French officer who bore the colour, and cast it back into the midst of his own men; but this act of heroism cost him his life, a French marksman shot him dead. From *Navy and Army Illustrated 1897* by Chas Lowe. "His last act was to throw the retrieved Colour to his men, demonstrating that the honour of the Regiment meant more to him than life." *Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard* by R H Paterson p46 Vol I.

Lord George Hamilton 1692-1737, (later Earl of Orkney) was born in 1666, a nephew of Lord James Douglas and of the Earl of Angus. Appointed Company commander aged twelve, by 1688 he was Lieutenant Colonel, and in command at the siege of Landen in 1693 and Namur in 1695. The first to be promoted to Field Marshal in the British Army (1736), he died in London aged 71.

Lieutenant-General **Sir Henry Erskine Bt** 1762-1765, Born in 1710, he died in York in August 1765. Author of "In the Garb of Old Gaul" the Regiment's slow march.

Succeeded by **John, Marquis of Lorne**, 1765-1782 born 1723, afterwards Duke of Argyll when The Royals then became 'Argyll's'. He died in 1806, aged 83.

Sir James Kempt, 1846-1854, born 1764, a career soldier and distinguished Peninsula veteran. He died aged 90.

Field Marshall **Sir Edward Blackeney** GCB GCH, 1854-1868, born in Newcastle in 1778, commissioned in 1794, wounded twice in the Peninsular, he died as Lieutenant Governor of Chelsea Hospital on 2nd August 1868.

Sir George Bell 1868-1877, born in Ireland in 1794, he fought in the Peninsular, joined 1st Foot 1826 as Lieutenant, commanded 1st Battalion in the Crimea, promoted General in March 1873. He did the impossible when in command of Fort Couteau-du-Lac, Canada, and recovered 16 guns, 24-pounders and 4,000 round shot from the St Lawrence river in the middle of winter and successfully unspiked and remounted them. He died in London in July 1877.

Major-General **Sir E A Stuart Bt**, 1897-1903, born in Canada in 1832 he joined The Royals as Ensign in 1852. Served in Crimea, he was wounded at the siege of Sevastopol, served in the China War of 1860. He died in London in August 1903.

Lieutenant-General **G H Moncrieff**, 1903-1918, Born in 1836, an Ensign in 1st Foot on 6 June 1854, he served in the Crimea and Canada, and died in October 1918.



Royal Scots Museum

Moments in Time



August

1	1638	<i>Le Régiment de Douglas</i> took part in the siege of Renty, which was of short duration as it was carried by assault on 9 August.
	1692	Lord George Hamilton (later Earl of Orkney) becomes Colonel of the Regiment.
	1918	Attack on Villemontoire – 9 th and 13 th battalions.
	1921	Regiment re-named The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment).
2	1868	Field Marshal Sir Edward Blackeney GCB GCH Colonel of the Regiment died.
3	1692	Battle of Steenkirque – Col Robert Douglas died retrieving the colours.
	1868	General Sir George Bell becomes Colonel of the Regiment.
4	1914	Outbreak of the First World War During 'The Great War' the Regiment expanded to 35 battalions, 15 of these were front line units. Of 100,000 men serving, more than 11,000 were killed and 40,000 wounded - a casualty rate over 50%. The Regiment was the largest in Scotland and suffered the greatest number of casualties.
7	1846	General Sir James Kempt GCB GCH, becomes Colonel of the Regiment.
	1809	Flushing (Expedition to Walcheren) – 3 rd Battalion.
	1765	Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Erskine Bt, Colonel of the Regiment, died. Succeeded by John, Marquis of Lorne.
8	1643	Douglas's Regiment attacked Turin, Piedmont. The garrison capitulated 27 Sept.
10	1794	Calvi, Corsica – 2 nd Battalion and The Royal Irish Regiment, stormed the fortified town of Calvi, both praised in General Orders.
	1922	The official opening of the living War Memorial, The Royal Scots Club by Her Royal Highness The Princess Mary.
11	1762	Havannah, Cuba – 2 nd Battalion.
	1918	Parvillers – 5 th /6 th Battalion.
13	1704	Battle of Blenheim – 1 st and 2 nd Battalions achieved unprecedented success by capturing no less than five standards and 571 prisoners of war.
15	1809	Flushing surrenders – success attributed to "the gallant and rapid charge made by Captain Hay with the light company of The Royal Scots at the moment of the enemy's sally." <i>Thistle 1893</i>
19	1903	Major-General Sir E A Stuart, Colonel of the Regiment, died.
20	1903	Lieutenant-General G H Moncrieff, becomes Colonel of the Regiment.
	1860	Capture of the Taku Forts, China – 2 nd Bn.
21	1954	Freedom of the Royal Burgh of Peebles conferred on the Regiment.
	1801	His Royal Highness Field-Marshal The Duke of Kent, becomes Colonel of the Regiment.
	1914	11 th and 12 th Service Battalions formed.

23	1914 1918	Battle of Mons – 2 nd Battalion. Private Mclver MM* awarded the Victoria Cross. 
25	1689 1693	Battle of Walcourt (Spanish Netherlands). "The King issued an order commanding officers to use their utmost endeavours to put down swearing in the Army, first by abstaining themselves from all oaths and execrations, and so giving a good example to their soldiers." <i>Records The Royal Scots.</i>
26	1695 1914	Surrender of Namur – 1 st and 2 nd Battalions. 68 Royals killed with 114 wounded. Battle of Le Cateau (between Audencourt and Caudry town) – 2 nd Battalion.
27	1799	Landing at the Helder – 2 nd Battalion.
28	1799	After some sharp fighting the garrison of the Helder fort in Holland retreated into the interior and The Royals and 92 nd Regiment captured a large train of heavy and field artillery, and two days afterwards the Dutch fleet surrendered without striking a blow.
31	1813 1918	Fall of San Sebastian. "our ultimate success depended on the repeated attacks made by The Royal Scots." - Sir Thomas Graham in dispatches. 531 Royals killed. Her Royal Highness, Princess Mary, The Princess Royal appointed the Regiment's first Colonel-in-Chief.

The Royal Scots Club

A tribute to those who have fallen in the Great War; as a rallying-place for all Royal Scots, past, present, and future; as a centre from which all schemes for the benefit of the Regiment can be worked.

"There still exists a certain corner in the Club lounge, sacred on a Saturday evening to certain "old files" of the Regiment, and it is from this quarter that the disturbance invariably emanates. The victims of their ancient ditties, however, are remarkably tolerant; in fact, have even become so appreciative that Charlie Fox is always appealed to lead off with that up-to-date composition, "The Farmer's Boy", on the conclusion of which the fingers of our old friend, Pat Reilly, or his confederate, Mr J Sinclair, wander over the piano keys to some familiar air that has the effect of making some other "old hand" burst into song. Once under way, song and story follow each other in rapid succession, and an atmosphere of fun and enjoyment prevails until the approach of the closing hour, when all seem loath to leave. Perhaps they are contemplating the somewhat frigid reception awaiting them from the partners of their joys and sorrows on their arrival home, but probably these good ladies recognize the fact that the Club is a far far better place than their husbands ever had before."

'Mandalay' p100, The Thistle 1927 2nd New Series Vol II /3.



The official opening of The Royal Scots Club, Abercrombie Place, Edinburgh on August 10th 1922, by Her Royal Highness Princess Mary, the Colonel in Chief of the Regiment. The current Colonel in Chief is HRH Princess Anne. www.royalscotclub.com.



THE
ROYAL SCOTS
CLUB
EDINBURGH

Private Hugh Mclver VC MM*

Private Hugh Mclver was born at Linwood, Renfrewshire on 21 June 1890. A miner he joined the Army on 18 August 1914 and was posted to the 2nd Battalion in France on 11 May 1915. He won the Military Medal on the Somme for actions on 14 July 1916 and a bar to it, for daring and initiative during daylight patrols in enemy lines on 1 July 1918.

The citation for his Victoria Cross states:

"For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty when employed as a company-runner east of Courcelles-le-Comte on 23 Aug 1918. In spite of heavy artillery and machine-gun fire, he carried messages regardless of his own safety. Single-handed, he pursued an enemy scout into a machine-gun post, and having killed six of the garrison, captured twenty prisoners with two machine guns. This gallant action enabled the company to advance unchecked. Later, he succeeded at great personal risk in stopping the fire of a British tank which was directed in error against our own troops at close range. By this very gallant action Private Mclver undoubtedly saved many lives."

Sadly, Mclver was killed in action 10 days later on 2 September. His parents received his Victoria Cross from King George V at Buckingham Palace on 13 February 1919. The Museum was recently donated Mclver's death plaque which will be displayed next to his medals. Can you find Mclver's Victoria Cross in the museum?



The Victoria Cross was instituted in 1856 by Queen Victoria. Made from the bronze of Russian guns captured after the siege of Sevastopol in 1855 it is awarded for exceptional gallantry by individuals in the face of the enemy; the same honour for all ranks.

Colonels of the Regiment

His Royal Highness Prince Edward, Field-Marshal *The Duke of Kent*

Prince Edward, 4th son of George III, Duke of Kent and Strathearn, born 1767, became Colonel of The Royal Regiment of Foot on 21 August 1801. During his army career he attempted unpopular reforms in Gibraltar, but also founded a system of regimental schools which he started for the benefit of the young Privates and children of the NCOs and men of the 4th

Battalion. During his command the title 'The Royal Scots' was conferred on the Regiment. His daughter, Queen Victoria, the 'Daughter of the Regiment', was born into the Regiment on 24 May 1819. He died less than a year after her birth from a pulmonary inflammation.



www.theroyalscots.co.uk Charity Number SCO05163

The Royal Scots Museum is an independent museum with charitable status, reliant entirely on voluntary contributions for its upkeep. It receives no part of the admission fee to The Castle so any donation you may wish to make helps to sustain the Museum.