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## EARLY SCOTS MILITARY UNIFORMS.

AN entire uniform dress for the members of a regiment is of comparatively modern institution. When the feudal army took the field, each knight wore his own armour and his own heraldic cognisances, and his followers, over their armour, wore his badge. If their arms and armour were sufficient, there was probably little thought of interference with the composition or colour of the clothes which they chose to wear underneath. The Crusaders wore a cross in addition to any other marks distinctive of their origin, and the cross itself had a national character—thus the English Crusaders wore the Cross of St. George. In later times, as in the wars with Scotland, this same cross of St. George was still used, smaller in scale probably, as the national badge of the English soldier. When the southern Scots, who fought at Ancrum Moor on the side of the English, found that the battle was going against them and their English allies, their English badges, it is said, disappeared very fast.

The personal guards of kings and other great feudal lords wore more than badges; they were arrayed entirely in their masters' livery. The term, "The Queen's livery" is used to-day to designate indiscriminately any of the uniforms of the Queen's army. Old prints exhibit the Scottish Archer Guard of France arrayed in tunics of the French royal arms—blue, with the golden lilies; and on 3rd February, 1685, we find a troop of Claverhouse's Royal Regiment of Horse being clothed in red, lined and faced with

yellow, the Royal Stuart livery. In the same year the King writes to the Treasury that the regiment is "to be our own Regiment of Horse, and to have rank and precedence accordingly, and the trumpeters of the severall troopes, and the kettle-drummers of that regiment to be for the future in our own Livry.—21st Dec. 1685." Thus the regimental uniform began to come into existence along with the standing army.

Red was by no means the usual wear of Scottish cavalry at that time. On 22nd February, 1683, General Dalziel informed the Privy Council that "he cannot be provided with als much cloath of one colour as will be cloathes to the regiment of dragoons," which had been mustered about two years before, and of which the General had been made Colonel. The Council ordered the Manufacturing Company at Newmills to furnish the cloth required, but a fortnight later the order was recalled, and the General was allowed to nominate such persons as should be licensed "to import 2436 elnes of stone-grey cloth conform to a sealed swatch." Here, at anyrate, was the first title of Dalryell's Dragoons, to be called the Greys—"Grey Dragoons" was the first form of the name. Shortly afterwards Mar's Regiment, raised in 1689 only to be disbanded the next year, was called, from doubtless a similar reason, "Mar's Greybreeks," and Mr. Ross, who in his beautiful and interesting volume on *Scottish Regimental Colours*, has collected so much of the little that is known about early Scots uniforms, gives his opinion that the use of grey cloth was by no means confined to the dragoons. He cites an entry of the cost of supplying part of the Edinburgh Castle garrison with coats of "country cloth," and an order on James Maxwell of Kirkconnell, to furnish 1200 ells of plaiding for stockings for the soldiers and inferior officers who are appointed to be at Stirling (Treasury Sederunt, 13th September, 1688). He thinks that the price of suits made by an Edinburgh tailor for a regiment

which was raised in King William's time was too low to admit of the theory that they were of aught else but homespun. These last clothes seem to have been of hodden-grey. The use of the term "stone grey," as the colour specified for the Dragoons' uniform, is perhaps some assistance in the question of the meaning of the word *hodden*. For the hodden grey of the uniforms of the London Scottish, and some other volunteer regiments is little, if anything, different from what is usually called stone-colour. Unbaked and still levigable clay was called *hudds*. But if the word were thought more akin to *hade*, and to refer to the twist or twill in the weaving, grey-tweel<sup>1</sup> is again roughly descriptive of the fabric. In any case, it was nothing other than the undyed homespun which the Covenanting farmers and other countrymen of Scotland wore every day. It was probably somewhat for this reason that, on 28th August, 1684, the Privy Council asked the Company of Cloth Manufacturers at Newmills for a cloth "of a dye that will distinguish sojors from other skulking and vagrant persons who have hitherto imitated the livery of the king's sojors." It wasn't pleasantly put, and it was doubtful which were the imitators. The Company replied, that though it could not make the cloth it could import it, if permitted, from England. Thereafter it produced a specimen. The Council put off the decision on the matter, in order to allow of the attendance of Dalyell. Afterwards it met again, and though Dalyell was still absent, it approved of the specimen, which appears to have been of a "red or scarlet cullor," and ordained it to be the colour of the uniforms of "horse, foot, and dragoons." The inclusion of the dragoons, observes Mr. Ross, brought Lieutenant-General Dalyell upon the scene. He obliged the Council to issue a fresh Act, permitting the importation of grey cloth for the dragoons, although scarlet was to be used for the rest of the army.

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<sup>1</sup> "Tweed," as the name of a cloth, is said to have originated in the mistake of a London tailor, who misread the Scots word "tweel."

It would be interesting at the present moment, when tacticians talk of the invisibility desirable for the British soldier, to know what old Dalryell's reasons were when he insisted on retaining grey as the colour for his Dragoons. Kakhi is, or was originally an East Indian dye, which is found to colour drill and other fabrics a tint much like the stones and dry grass of the open in tropical countries. Dalryell may have seen that the colder stone-grey of his homespun was as suited to the hill-sides in mistier Scotland, or he may have found that he gained as much as he lost in the confusion of his dragoons with mounted farmers of the opposite and worse drilled faction. Clothing chosen of a colour which might enable the wearer to move through the landscape unseen had been thought of long before. The "hunting suit of Lincoln green," that Allan-bane saw in his vision—the green that the Holy Friar of Copmanhurst donned when he played the Sherwood Forester, was none other.

"Though your clothes are of light Lincolne green  
And mine gray russett and torne,"

says the Beggar of the ballad to Robin Hood.<sup>1</sup>

When the Grey Dragoons ceased to wear grey uniforms we are not aware. Evidence has been mentioned already that some grey was used in the Scots army in the reign of William III.<sup>2</sup> But the title of Greys was destined to be preserved by the Royal Scots Dragoons on another account—that they were mounted on grey or white horses. How soon these horses were adopted there is also no evidence. It is hardly possible that Dalryell was able to procure a regiment of grey horses, even though, for private or public reasons, he liked grey clothes. There is nothing to lead one to think that grey horses were so much the rule in

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop Percy's Folio MS., I. 15 (print).

<sup>2</sup> A clothier's contract, dated in 1693, for grey coats and breeches for common soldiers and sergeants in the English army is preserved among the Harleian MSS., No. 6844, in the British Museum—*per* Grose, *Military Antiq.* II. 9.

Scotland in his time, that he had no choice but to take them. It is about the beginning of the 18th century that we find the name of "Scots Regiment of White Horses" occurring, as well as that of "Grey Dragoons" (*Hist. Rec. of the Royal Regt. of Scots Dragoons*, 1840), which latter name lingered into the middle of that century. Were the white or grey horses the device of William III.? That astute as well as warlike Prince is known to have brought over with him, in November, 1688, a troop of Dutch Life Guards similarly mounted. It is in his reign, too, that we first find the British Life Guards horsed black.

The red coat came in time to be adopted by the Scots Greys, not because it was the livery of the Stuarts or the badge of the cavaliers, for red was adopted by Cunningham's Dragoons, now 7th (the Queen's Own) Hussars, which was mustered in 1690, and was, as Mr. Ross observes, Whig to a man. But the Scottish regiments were in process of being fused with the English into one army, and, in both countries, red had already been adopted as the colour for the soldiers' coats. Just about forty years before the Scots Privy Council of Charles II. approved the red cloth imported by the Newmills Company, Oliver Cromwell had selected it for the army of the Parliament. "I learn your troop refuse the new coats," he writes to one of his captains. "Wear them or go home. I stand no nonsense from anyone. It is a needful thing that we be as one in colour." Carlyle's observation on the order is—"Red coats for the first time."

It would be interesting to know the early uniforms of the Regiment of Royal Scots, which has the honour of being the first Regiment of Foot, and claims descent from the Scots Guards in France.<sup>1</sup> In the picture of its colonel, Sir Robert Douglas of Glenbervie, seizing the French colour at the battle of Steinkirk, 1692, the colonel is represented, pre-

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<sup>1</sup> And from its antiquity has been dubbed "Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard."—Grose, *Mil. Antiq.* I. 61.

sumably correctly (as the picture appears in the Regimental History), in a red coat, purplish shorts, white stockings, and a hat of much the shape and colour that our Colonial Contingents wear to-day.

The history of uniforms of tartan begins at a later date, if we confine it to those of regiments in the immediate service of the king.

The earliest uniform tartan of any such regiment is, as Dr. R. C. Maclagan has shown in these columns (Vol. XII. pp. 20, 59), the tartan worn by the Royal Company of Archers, the king's bodyguard for Scotland, in 1715. The earliest kilted force, however, in the king's pay was the Black Watch. This historic regiment deduces a tolerably continuous pedigree from the Watch enrolled in Perthshire by the Duke of Atholl about the middle of the seventeenth century. We may conclude that both the officers and the privates then wore the Atholl tartan, which at a later date is actually found to be used in the regimental undress uniform.

It is certain that in the beginning of the eighteenth century, distinctive patterns of tartans marking the district which the wearer hailed from, were in full use. Hill Burton (VIII. 528), says that the earliest notice of this is to be found in Martin's *Description of the Western Islands*, which was published in 1703. But search might reveal earlier evidences. In the Grant of Grant Regality Court Book (General Register House), we find that on 20th July, 1704, Ronald Makdonald of Galloway and other vassals of the Grant, in Lagan, in Badenoch, and their tenants were ordained "to have readie tartan, short coates, trewes and short hose of red and grein set dyce,<sup>1</sup> all broad springed betwixt and the aught of August next, and to be readie upone 48 houris advertisement to rendevouze when the Laird of Grant shall call them for his hosting or hunting under the failie of fyve poundis stirling." The Grant can scarcely

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Anderson, of the Historical Department of the Register House, agrees that the word appears to be *dyce*.

have been imposing his tartan on these people then for the first time. If so, this can hardly have been the first intimation of it. Eighteen days' notice of a decree of a court sitting at Castle Grant was not very long warning for the people of Badenoch. The Grants' own people of Strathspey have even shorter notice, only twelve days. The order issued to them is made on the 27th of July, and on the appointed day they are to be ready to appear "in Haighland coates, trewes and short hose of tartane of red and greine set broad springed . . . within the country of Strathspey for the said Laird of Grant or his father, their hosting and hunting, and this under failie of 20 lb. Scots."

Trewes are prescribed here by The Grant, but we know from Taylor the water poet's description of a Highland hunt in 1618 that the belted plaid was adopted then by high and low during their residence among the clans (Taylor, *Works*, p. 40, Iona Club Publications). Among the half-dozen clansmen portrayed in Morier's picture, an "Incident in the Scotch Rebellion, 1745," now in possession of Her Gracious Majesty, and by special permission reproduced in colour in Lord Archibald Campbell's work on *Highland Dress*, only one is not in a kilt;<sup>1</sup> and it is significant that the kilt, and a uniform kilt, was adopted as a matter of course on the new embodiment of the "Black Watch" as Royal Highlanders in 1740. The name "Black Watch" was in use before that date, owing, says Stewart of Garth (*Sketches*, 248), to the comparison of the colour of their clothing with the scarlet in which the king's regular troops were then clad in from top to toe. That the term had any sinister meaning, such as the term "black mail," is improbable, as it was used among the captains of the companies which composed it and their friends (Letter from Lord Lovat to Sir James Grant, of Grant, April, 1739 : Fraser, *Chiefs of Grant*). The six

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<sup>1</sup> The artist's Highlanders are, in the patterns of their tartans, as studiously diverse as the swells in a tailor's fashion plate ; though, naturally, they are not so staid and mild in their demeanour.



independent companies which then composed the force were, according to Stewart, commanded respectively by Lord Lovat, Sir Duncan Campbell of Lochnell, Colonel Grant of Ballindalloch, Colonel Alexander Campbell of Finab, John Campbell of Carrick, and George Munro of Culcairn. Perhaps it was not The Grant's red and green set of 1704, but the blue and green variety, exemplified in Fraser's *Chiefs of Grant*, which was the tartan used by Colonel Grant for his company. If so, the tartans of all these commanders were dark, even among tartans.

The adoption of a new tartan for the reconstituted regiment in 1740 shows that each of these companies and the clans behind them regarded their tartan as the badge of their clan, and no mere whim of their individual commanders for the time. Stewart observes that to have adopted the tartan of any one of the six companies which he mentions would have been distasteful to the others, and relates that the Earl of Crawford, the colonel, being a lowlander, and thus having no tartan of his own, had a special pattern "designed for the Regiment, which has ever since been known as the 42nd Tartan" (*Sketches*, I. 255). Black, blue, and green were and are its component colours. The uniform included the belted plaid, or kilt and plaid in one; the jacket was scarlet; the bonnet blue, round the edge of which was a diced border of red, white, and green checks, said to be in allusion to the fess chequy of the various families of Stuarts. Stewart then adds a fact which, in view of the temper of the six companies, points to a connection of the regiment with Athol in regard to which there could be no thought of competition: it is that, in the uniform of 1740, the "philibeg"—the kilt without the plaid—used in undress, was of Athol tartan. The pipers, and subsequently the band, "wore a red tartan of very bright colours (of the pattern known by the name of the Stewart or Royal Tartan), so that they could be more clearly seen at a distance" (*Stewart's Sketches*).

If Grose is at all correct (*Military Antiquities*, I. 182–84 ;

plates) the original set of "the 42nd" is not that now used by the Regiment. The pattern of the officer's and sergeant's tartan is represented in his plates as if it were made up of sets of four equal and parallel stripes at intervals on the cloth crossing similar sets at intervals, after the manner of a "Glen-Urquhart" check, on a very large scale. The patterns of the privates' tartans have four, five, or six of these stripes in each set or bundle; in other respects they are the same as those of the officers and sergeants. The piper's tartan, which cannot be said to be ample, or continuous enough to form a kilt, has narrower sets of five thin lines similarly at intervals, crossing others of the same sort, diagonally, at an angle that shakes one's faith in the strict accuracy of any of Grose's representations of tartan.

We are not aware how far back the present regimental tartan may be traced. It may, however, be observed that it is nearly, if not absolutely, identical with the old hard-tartan hangings of the dining-hall of Loudoun Castle, which are supposed to have belonged to a date certainly not later than 1804.

In 1745, shortly before the outbreak of the Rebellion of that year, the Earl of Loudoun raised a regiment of Highlanders, of which he became colonel, while the Duke of Argyll was Lieutenant-Colonel. That regiment which served in Scotland and afterwards in Flanders, was reduced on the re-establishment of peace in 1748. But the Loudoun Castle tartan ought still to be mentioned as it may be found to bear not only on the question of the uniform of the Loudoun Regiment, but on the question, in which Lord Archibald Campbell has taken so prominent and learned a part, of the identity of the 42nd tartan with the old clan tartan of the Campbells.

ED.

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