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The King's Own Scottish Borderers: A Concise History

Trevor Royle

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The King’s Own Scottish Borderers is one of only two Scottish regiments never to have been amalgamated until it joined forces with The Royal Scots to form the 1st battalion of The Royal Regiment of Scotland in 2006. It is also unusual in that it lost its Scottish status between 1782 and 1887 when it served as the 25th (Sussex) Regiment of Foot. Formed in Edinburgh in 1689, its first operational role was to defend the city during the period of turmoil following the accession of William and Mary of Orange. That same year the regiment fought at the Battle of Killiecrankie, where they withstood a ferocious charge by the Highlanders supporting James II. Since then, the regiment has fought in most of the major campaigns fought by the British Army. In 1887, the regiment became The King’s Own Scottish Borderers. It served with distinction during the two World Wars and achieved nationwide fame in 1915 when Sergeant Piper Daniel Laidlaw won the Victoria Cross during the Battle of Loos. Despite coming under heavy fire he played his pipes in full view of the enemy, encouraging the Borderers with the sound of "Blue Bonnets o’er the Border" and "The Standard on the Braes o’ Mar." This concise account of the King's Own Scottish Borderers puts its story into the context of British military history and makes use of personal testimony to reveal the life of the regiment. Contains a number of rare and previously unpublished photographs from the King's Own Scottish Borderer's archives.

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