

THE FALCON

March, 1952

published under the authority of Lt. Col. M. E. George,
Commanding Officer of The 48th Highlanders in Canada.

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Mr. Churchill's Eulogy:

"The King was greatly loved by all his peoples. He was respected as a man and as a prince far beyond the many realms over which he reigned. The simple dignity of his life, his manly virtues, his sense of duty--alike as ruler and servant of the vast spheres and communities for which he bore responsibility--his gay charm and happy nature, his example as husband and father in his own family circle, his courage in war or peace--all these were aspects of his character which won a glint of admiration, now here, now there, from innumerable eyes whose gaze fell upon the throne.

We thought of him as a young naval lieutenant in the Battle of Jutland, We thought of him when calmly, when without ambition or want of self-confidence, he assumed the heavy burden of the Crown and succeeded his brother, whom he loved and to whom he had rendered perfect loyalty. We thought of him so faithful in his study and discharge of state affairs; so strong in his devotion to the enduring honour of our country; so self restrained in his judgments of men and affairs; so uplifted above the clash of party politics yet so attentive to them, so wise and shrewd in judging between what matters and what does not.

All this we saw and admired. His conduct on the throne may well be a model and a guide to constitutional sovereigns throughout the world to-day and also in future generations.

The last few months of King George's life--with all the pangs and physical stresses that he endured--his life hanging by a thread from day to day--and he all the time cheerful and undaunted--stricken in body but quite undisturbed and even unaffected in spirit--these have made a profound and enduring impression and should be a help to all.

He was sustained not only by his natural buoyancy but by the sincerity of his Christian faith.

During these last months the King walked with death as if death were a companion, an acquaintance whom he recognized and did not fear. In the end death came as a friend and after a happy day of sunshine and sport. After good night to those who loved him best, he fell asleep as every man and woman who strives to fear God and nothing else in the world may hope to do.

The nearer one stood to him the more these facts were apparent."
- broadcast on February 7 by Prime Minister
Winston Churchill.

Following The Regiment's regular parade on Friday, February 8 all ranks were drawn up on the floor of The Armouries for a simple service of worship conducted by The Padre to commemorate the life of His Late Majesty King George VI and to pray for God's blessing and comfort for the members of The Royal Family and especially Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Lt. Col. George read Psalm 23 and the prayers for the burial of the dead and for Divine guidance to The

Queen and blessing on The Empire. Two pipers played a lament and The Regiment joined in singing for the first time, for most of them, "God Save The Queen". It was a simple, sincere expression of sympathy and loyalty.

The Regiment paraded with other units of The Army, Navy and Air Force and The Royal Canadian Mounted Police to a service on the steps of The Provincial Legislative Building, Queen's Park at 3 p.m., Friday, February 15. It was a memorial ceremony on the occasion of the funeral of The Late King George VI. The massed band led in the singing of one verse of "Abide With Me", "Lead Kindly Light" and "O Canada". Those were followed by "Last Post", two minutes silence, Reveille and The National Anthem.

The following telegram was sent on February 8 to Her Majesty The Queen, Colonel-in-Chief of The 48th Highlanders:

"The Commanding Officer, Officers, N.C.O.s and men of The 48th Highlanders of Canada extend to Your Majesty their deepest sympathy in the Empire's loss in the death of His Late Majesty The King and assure Your Majesty of their steadfast loyalty now and always.

"M. E. George, Lt. Col."
Commanding Officer."

The following telegram was received in reply:

"I send to all ranks of 48th Highlanders Regiment of Canada my sincere thanks for their message of sympathy and devotion which I appreciated deeply."

"Elizabeth R."

Colonel-in-Chief.

REGIMENT TO ATTEND SUMMER CAMP AT NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - JUNE 28-JULY 5

A change in policy at Central Command regarding Summer Camps has recently been announced.

Infantry units from the Command, instead of attending a series of courses at Petawawa, are this year going to Summer Camp at Niagara-on-the-Lake by Brigades. In our case, in addition to the 48th Highlanders will be the other units from 4 Bde., Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, Royal Regiment of Canada and the Toronto Scottish Regiment.

This will afford a marvellous opportunity to weld the Regiments closer together, as the Regiment will have its own tent lines, messes, etc. Rivalry will no doubt be keen between the 4 Regiments of the Bde. and it is important that as many as possible attend in order to uphold the name and traditions of the Regiment.

Remember the dates - Saturday, June 28th to Saturday, July 5.

Plan NOW TO ATTEND THIS YEAR'S SUMMER CAMP AT NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE WITH THE REST OF THE BOYS FROM YOUR COMPANY.

THE RETIREMENT OF PIPE-MAJOR JAMES R. FRASER

On a July day in 1892 a young man entered the Gordon Highlanders recruiting depot in Aberdeen and, in the military parlance of the day, "took the Queen's Shilling". Thus began the military career of Pipe-Major James R. Fraser, a figure familiar to all who have served with The 48th Highlanders since 1913. Soon this career, which in sixty years has carried him across four continents, will come to a close with his retirement from the pipe-majorship of the 48th Pipe Band, and if the story of those sixty years of service under six sovereigns could be filmed the result would make the "Cavalcade" of Noel Coward pale into insignificance.

His years of active service with the Gordons were adventurous ones. First came a tour of service in India which saw the storming of Dargai Heights, battles with fierce tribesmen along the Punjab frontier, and the long march through the hills of the North-West to the relief of the beleaguered British garrison in Chitral. Then it was off to South Africa and years of trekking over sun-baked veldt and rolling kopjes through Cape Colony to Paardeburg, Dreifontein, Johannesburg and Belfast as the Gordons pursued the wily, sharp-shooting Boer. And then it was home again to peaceful years - years which rolled steadily by until one day the calendar in the barrack-room read "1913" and Corporal Fraser realized that with twenty-one years service to his credit he would soon become a "time-expired" man. He was considering applying for a civil service post when one day he read a notice posted on the depot bulletin board, and thus were set in motion the wheels that were to bring to Canada one of its most distinguished teachers of the pipes, and to the 48th Highlanders a pipe-major who was to serve the Regiment for thirty-nine long and successful years.

Early in 1913, Lieutenant-Colonel William Hendrie, O.C. of the 48th Battalion Highlanders, as the Regiment was then known, was faced with the problem of engaging the services of a competent piper to take over the pipe-majorship of the Regimental Pipe Band, Pipe-Major Beaton having recently retired after nineteen years' service. It occurred to Colonel Hendrie that the Regiment's affiliation with the Gordon Highlanders might be the means of securing an Old Country piper for this post and straightaway a letter was despatched overseas asking if such a man was available. On receipt of this inquiry the O.C. of the Gordons posted the notice referred to earlier asking for applicants from among men nearing the end of their service. Two men responded and one, Corporal James R. Fraser, received the appointment. Upon receiving his discharge papers he sailed for Canada early in May, 1913, and took over the pipe-majorship of the 48th Pipe Band on the 24th of May, a post he has held without interruption ever since.

It is a curious fact that both Pipe-Major Fraser's first and last important ceremonial parades with the Regiment have been on the occasion of visits by Colonels-in-Chief, the first by the Late General Sir Ian Hamilton on the 7th of June, 1913, the last by Her Majesty The Queen (then Princess Elizabeth) on the 13th day of October, 1951. Great occasions both, but what of the years between? Soon he will step from the ranks of the Band to a position of honour and take the salute as the Regiment does him the honour of marching past, and as he stands there who can say that he will not see and feel again the pageantry and thrills of his last thirty-nine years.

Perhaps he will recall the thousands of parade and practice nights in the Armouries; the long train trips to Chicago, Washington, St. John and Pittsburgh, and the Band's reception by wondering, cheering throngs; splendid ballrooms hung with gay tartan, filled with the glitter of uniform, the rustle of evening dress and the rollicking strains of the "Reel O' Tulloch". Or possibly he will see again the Pipe Band in khaki swinging out of the Armouries to a lively six-eight tune at the head of the Regiment on the way to the docks and Camp Niagara - and then grim days in 1914 and again 1939 as he watched with a sinking heart the cream of his Band in drabber khaki leaving to fight grimmer battles than those of summer camp. Then there will be recollections of gay wedding parties, flashing photographers' bulbs, sombre funeral-processions, and the introduction to many dignitaries among them a young princess who within a few short months was to become his Queen, Elizabeth II. No doubt, too, he will recall the elation he surely felt when a 48th Band would play off the competition field with the cup. Certainly the men who played in those Bands will not forget him for his "You did very well, boys" was as inspiring to hear in victory as it was comforting in defeat.

But possibly the young faces in the Band as it marches past will hold his thoughts more than anything else, for his great interest lies in teaching and Canada owes him a debt of gratitude for the hundreds of young pipers he has given her over the years. The Regiment, too, owes a share of that debt for of the young pipers, he has developed a goodly portion have donned a 48th uniform and contributed to the fame of the Band and consequently to that of the Regiment. No more striking proof of his ability as a teacher could be shown than the fact that of the eight pipers who played in the Competition Band which carried off honours from the Hamilton Games last summer, seven received their early tuition at his hands. And among the young faces in the Band as it marches past him he will be seeing the strength of the Band in years to come.

In the memory of a piper who has risen to join the Band from an early start by Pipe-Major Fraser, there stands out several highlights. First, the desire to learn the pipes - the interview with the Pipe-Major - the first lesson - the months of practice chanter work - the first set of pipes - the mastering of a shaky "Kenmure's On and Awa" - the gradual accomplishment of more difficult tunes - the issue of a uniform - the first parade with "the Band"!

Among the many who have experienced these thrills is, appropriately enough, the man who will succeed Pipe-Major Fraser, Pipe-Sergeant Archie Dewar. Joining the Band in 1928 Archie went overseas as a piper with the 1st Battalion Pipe Band in 1939 and served with it through England, Italy and Germany, finally returning home in 1945 with the rank of Pipe-Major. After demobilization Archie rejoined the Band as Pipe-Sergeant and now will take over Pipe-Major Fraser's duties.

The Pipe-Major Happily has decided to continue his teaching of the pipes, and with the kind permission of Lieutenant-Colonel M.E. George, the present O.C. of the Regiment, will retain his uniform in recognition of his many years of service with the Regiment.

And so Pipe-Major Fraser's career which began one summer day long ago in Aberdeen will soon come to an official close. He hands to his successor a great responsibility, that of keeping the name of the 48th Highlanders Pipe Band where it belongs - out in front. To Pipe-Major Fraser au revoir and a fine job -- to Pipe-Major Dewar, welcome and the best of luck!

The following article appeared in The Evening Telegram, published on Saturday, March 1, 1952 and written by Herbert Biggs:

To the accompaniment of crashing drums and skirling pipes, Pipe Major James R. Fraser of the 48th Highlanders, Canada's grandest old soldier, said good-bye to his beloved Regiment last night. He handed over his pipes, adorned with the Queen's colour, to his successor, Pipe Sergeant Archie Dewar, and accepted with great dignity the salute of the Regiment.

That final salute represented the greatest tribute a grateful regiment could give him, and it was a moving sight to see this white-haired man of 79 years, erect as always, giving up the thing he loved most, standing alone on a dais, taking the salute of his commanding officer, Lt. Col. M. E. George and his officers and men.

But that was not all. Long before the ceremony was due to start, the University Avenue Armouries, home of the 48th Highlanders, was filled to the doors. The galleries were filled and the floor had a solid cordon around it of spectators five deep. They, 5,000 of them, had come to pay tribute to this wonderful man who had given his country more than 60 years of service in the army.

Pipe bands from all over the district came too. Jimmy Fraser was something dear to them also and they wanted to add their note to the cascade of sound which shook the armouries to its foundations. There were the pipe bands of The Irish Regiment, The Toronto Scottish, Lorne Scots, Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Earls court Legion, Dominion Civil Service Branch of the Legion, RCAF 400 Squadron and Caber Feidh of Toronto.

The 48th Highlanders Brass Band was there too, and it played beautifully, but it was a pipers' show from start to finish. First part of the official programme was when the 48th Highlanders Pipe Band, with Pipe Major Fraser on the right flank, marched on, playing the mournful "Retreat", followed by a march, then the picturesque Reel and finally the regimental march, "Hielan' Laddie".

Then the massed bands - the 48th Highlanders and all the visitors - put on a breath-taking show. Marching abreast, with three giant drum majors leading, the pipers spread across the floor of the armouries.

In front, on the right, was Drum Major Colin Gordon, six feet one inch and weighing 219 pounds, of the 48th Highlanders. In the centre was Drum Major Len Davidson, Toronto Scottish, six feet two inches and on the left, Drum Major "Tiny" Thompson, Irish Regiment, six feet four inches and weighing 225 pounds.

These herculean men striding in front of the bands, and the bands themselves, marching and counter-marching, made a never to be forgotten picture.

Hundreds of veterans of the regiment fell in on the west side of the armouries and when Lt.-Col. M.E. George called for three cheers for the veteran of the famous Gordon Highlanders and of the 48th Highlanders they joined in the cheers.

Lt. Col. George, when addressing the battalion, said: "The name of James Fraser will be remembered as long as the Regiment lives." Everybody in the vast audience agreed with that, for the 48th Highlanders and Pipe Major James Fraser are almost one and the same thing.

"Not only was James Fraser a builder of bands but of the Regiment itself," continued Col. George.

There was one very impromptu but touching little item which perhaps was the most emotional thing of the evening. When Col. George called for Pipe Major James Fraser to come forward, the veteran soldier had to march all the way from the pipe band on the west side of the floor to the very centre, and as he moved forward he hesitated, for everyone knows Pipe Major Fraser dislikes being in the limelight. The brass band struck up very softly, "Auld Lang Syne". Perhaps at that moment James Fraser felt a little lonely and suddenly thought of what his future would be like without his beloved band.

Col. K. R. Marshall, honorary colonel of the 48th Highlanders, presented a cheque on behalf of the officers and ex-officers of the Regiment. Then came a long procession of presentations, a radio, table lamp, more little envelopes, a silver tray and lots of other things, and the great crowd was glad for him.

It is a long time since James Fraser, as little more than a boy, piped the Gordon Highlanders into victory in India; it is a long time since South Africa or World War I, but James Fraser must have seen it all again last night as he stood alone accepting the salute of his Regiment -- the end of his soldiering.

REMEMBER OUR MOTTO:

Our Regimental Crest bears the Gaelic motto "Dileas Gu Braht", which can be translated "Faithful Forever". The Regimental history so clearly shows us how former members of the Regiment have sustained the valiant spirit of these words with the utmost gallantry through the gravest situations.

This motto applies the same to all of us to-day. Faithfulness in all our Regimental duties reflects pride in your unit and pride in yourselves. Your faithfulness can be shown in the smallest job as well as in the greatest. The spirit of these words is as much for the least of us as for the highest. Your attention to their meaning can be shown in your regularity in attending parades, and the way you tackle any job given to you, no matter how large or small. The spirit of these words can be reflected as well in the most monotonous of fatigues as well as in the most advanced and difficult of courses.

It is a brave motto to be worn proudly. It's your challenge and yours to live up to - Dileas Gu Braht!

OUR COLONEL-IN-CHIEF HAS A NEW JOB. All our heartfelt sympathy goes out to our Colonel-in-Chief as she assumes her Queenly duties upon the death of her father, the late King George VI. She takes over the burden which both directly and indirectly was responsible for the sudden death of one of the best-loved, if not THE best-loved British monarchs throughout the whole world. She is young, a lot younger than many of us in "B" Coy, and before her lies a life of service, the like of which not many of us would look forward to. Looking back in the history of the British Commonwealth of Nations one can see nothing but great advancements during the reign of our former Queens. We know that our new Queen will be all that her father was during his reign.

THE TRADITIONAL DRESS OF THE HIGHLANDER

by J. Telfer Dunbar, F.S.A. (Scot.)

Our knowledge of the dress worn by our Highland ancestors prior to the sixteenth century is very scanty. "Children of the Mist" would be an apt title for a treatise on the early dress of the Gael as our evidence emerges at brief fitful intervals and is seldom clear. In the eleventh century we hear of King Magnus returning from his raids on the coasts of the Western Highlands and taking the local style of costume back with him to Norway. The Sagas describe this costume as a short tunic and upper garments but the lack of leg covering soon earned the King the title of "Barelegged" or "Barefoot." We have to wait four centuries for our next description of any value. John Major, a native of East Lothian, published a History of Great Britain in 1521 containing the following description of the dress worn by the men of the Highlands. "From the middle of the thigh to the foot they have no covering for the leg, clothing themselves with a mantle instead of an upper garment and a shirt dyed with saffron." In times of war he says they wore a linen garment manifoldly sewed and painted or daubed with pitch, with a covering of deerskin. This linen garment is often seen on Highland grave slabs and sculptured stones and wrongly described as a kilt. In 1578, Bishop Lesley supplies us with the first really detailed description of the Highlanders' clothing which he points was made for use and not for ornament. This clothing consisted of long flowing mantles or plaids for all, those of the nobles being of several colours, and in addition, "villosae stragulae" or the shaggy rugs worn by the Irish, a short woollen jacket with open sleeves and large knee-length shirts of pleated linen with wide sleeves. The shirts of the rich were dyed with saffron whilst the poor contented themselves by smearing the shirt with grease. Several writers of this period mention both the trews and the plaid and indeed the former garment was included in the Highland suit made for King James V in 1538.

The garment most commonly mentioned at this early period is the "Saffron Shirt" which appears to have continued in use until about 1600. Trews had been in use for many centuries and are illustrated on a tenth century carved cross in Ireland. The antiquity of the trews is beyond dispute. Such authorities as M. D'Arbois de Jubainville point out that the Gauls wore trousers three centuries before the birth of Christ and derives the Gaelic word Tribhas from the Old French 'trebus', Medieval Latin 'tribuces' and Low Latin 'tubrucus'. The kilted Roman is said to have expressed surprise at the appearance of the "trousered" Celts. Writing in 1720, Defoe, author of "Robinson Crusoe", describes the seventeenth century Highlander as wearing breeches and stockings (probably all of one piece) but a satirical poem on the Highland Host in 1678 indicates a severe shortage of nether garments:-

"Their head, their neck, their legs and thighs
Are influenced by the skies,
Without a clout to interrupt them

They need not strip them when they whip them.

By the year 1600 the plaid is developing from a loose mantle and gradually becoming an entire garment well fitted to the life and conditions of the Highlander of that period. At night it was a large blanket giving ample protection from the elements and by day it was capable of

adjustment to suit the needs of the hour. The width of the old hand loom was governed by the fact that the shuttle had to be thrown from one hand to the other and therefore a web of cloth usually averaged about thirty inches wide. Two lengths of material were sewn selvedge to selvedge to form the belted plaid which was merely a rectangular shaped piece of cloth about five feet wide and about fifteen feet in length, although this latter measurement would vary enormously. Having placed it lengthwise over a belt the centre portion was folded in pleats by hand with about a yard of each end left smooth. The wearer then lay down with his body parallel to the pleats and folded the two ends over himself. These two ends formed two plain panels in front of his body and, having fastened the belt around his waist, he rose to his feet. Below the waist he now wore something resembling the modern kilt whilst the upper portion could be adjusted in a number of ways. After the jacket was put on, and if weapons were being carried, one corner of the plaid would be fastened to the left shoulder by a skewer or thong thus leaving the arms free. The rest of the upper portion was tucked into the belt. If the weather was bad the centre of the upper portion was pulled over the head and the remainder covered the arms and shoulders. Although we have illustrations of Highland dress dating from the mid-sixteenth century it is not until some two hundred years later that we have the method of wearing the belted plaid clearly portrayed. In the year 1743 the Black Watch were in London and a series of engravings were done by Van der Gucht which clearly show the various ways in which the belted plaid was worn.

As to the colours of these early garments unfortunately we know very little. One valuable piece of evidence however is contained in George Buchanan's History of Scotland--*Rerum Scotticarum Historia*, dated 1581:-

"They delight in variegated garments, especially stripes, and their favourite colours are purple and blue. Their ancestors wore plaids of many colours, and numbers still retain this custom but the majority now in their dress prefer a dark brown, imitating nearly the leaves of the heather, that when lying upon the heath in the day, they may not be discovered by the appearance of their clothes; in these wrapped rather than covered, they brave the severest storms in the open air, and sometimes lay themselves down to sleep even in the midst of snow."

The reason for the disappearance of the saffron shirt and its replacement by the belted plaid is a matter of conjecture. Martin Martin, a native of Skye, writing in 1703 says that "the first Habit wore by Persons of Distinction in the Islands was the Leni-Croich, from the Irish word 'Leni', which signifies a shirt, and 'Croch', saffron, because their shirt was dyed with that Herb...but the Islanders have laid it aside about a hundred years ago." It has been suggested that the final Elizabethan conquest of Ireland about 1603, saw the end of Irish influence on Highland social life which had hitherto been so strong.

Thus by the time of the Jacobite Rising we have the belted plaid and the trews as items of Highland dress but what of the little kilt or "philabeg" (an anglicised word from the Gaelic 'Feileadh Beag')? None of the many portraits painted before 1720 show this garment with

complete certainty and no such early specimens of the actual garment have survived. The reason I have given the above date is because in 1785 a letter was published in the 'Edinburgh Magazine' stating that Thomas Rawlinson, the English manager of an ironworks in Glengarry, invented the kilt by cutting off that portion of the belted plaid worn above the waist and that this happened about 1720. Amongst those who supported the story at the time was none other than that great man of knowledge, Sir John Sinclair, who compiled the first Statistical Account of Scotland. It is interesting to note, however, that whereas at first, in 1796, he wrote "it is well known that the philibeg was invented by an Englishman in Lochaber about sixty years ago," yet in an address to the Highland Societies of London and Scotland eight years later, he modifies his opinion and states "Whether the philibeg, or short petticoat, is an old part of the dress, or a modern alteration, is disputed. Many contend, that it was first substituted, on account of its lightness for the belted plaid, by Highland wood-cutters employed by English companies in Argyllshire and Lochaber, about the year 1730." When Sir John raised a regiment of Fencibles in 1794 he dressed them in tartan pantaloons as an expression of his opinion that the trews were the real "garb of old Gaul."

The time of the "Forty-Five" brings us to a most interesting item of authentic evidence. After Culloden, David Morier, a Swiss military artist whose many paintings bear witness to his accuracy, was commissioned by the Duke of Cumberland to paint a picture showing the Jacobite Highlanders in opposition to Barrell's Regiment. Prisoners from the battle were used as models and certainly the Highland dress is shown with great accuracy to detail. A variety of plaids, tartan jackets and possibly little kilts are all shown and the tartans which are painted with great sincerity and care, cannot be identified with any modern "clan" tartans. If the tartans depicted on the many authentic pre-1746 portraits are examined it will be seen that none of them can be identified with the modern "clan" patterns. The earliest of these, a portrait of a Highland Chief by Michael Wright in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery and dated about 1660 shows a carefully depicted tartan of buff, raw sienna, brown and black. The portrait of Lord Glenorchy painted in 1708 shows a tartan of greyish white with dark green, black and red stripes quite unlike any modern campbell tartan. Another fine portrait in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery shows Lord Duffus wearing a yellow, black, red and white tartan. In Castle Grant are eleven signed and dated portraits by Richard Waitt painted between 1713 and 1725 and showing the tartans most distinctly, each pattern being different and all unlike the modern Grant tartan. The very fine portrait of the Macdonald children painted before 1746 shows four different tartans none of which are the modern "Macdonald" tartan. The Morier picture of Culloden clearly shows the distinguishing feature between the Jacobite and Hanoverian forces, namely the white cockade of the former. James Ray, who wrote an excellent eye-witness account of the battle of Culloden, describes how a wounded Highlander who declared he was a Campbell could not be identified as such--someone having snatched off his bonnet--and goes on to explain, "I only mention this to show how we distinguished our Loyal clans from the Rebels; they being dress'd and equip'd all in one Way, except the Bonnet; ours having a Red or Yellow Cross or Ribbon; theirs a white Cockade." This clearly indicates that the clans could not be identified by their tartans. In the course of examining and