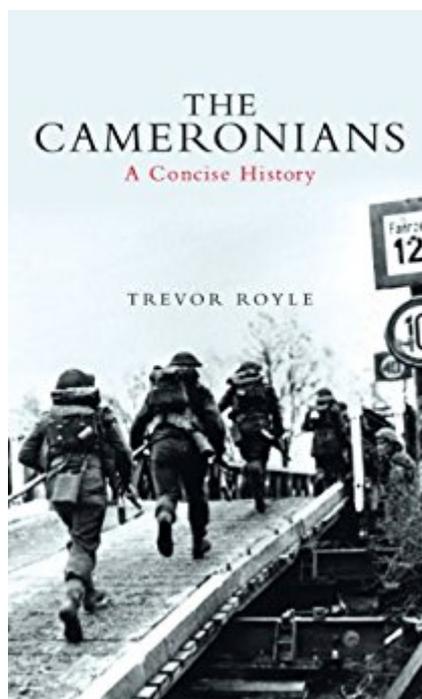


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The Cameronians: A Concise History



Synopsis

In May 1968, as part of cutbacks to the British Army, The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) was disbanded at a moving ceremony held at the same spot in Douglas in Lanarkshire at which it had been raised in 1689. And yet, although the regiment is no more, its place in history is unassailable. The ceremony embraced the history of one regiment, The Cameronians, which had its origins in the turbulent period that accompanied the rise of the House of Orange at the end of the seventeenth century, while its other component part - the 90th (Perthshire Light Infantry) - was raised as a light infantry regiment during the war against Revolutionary France. Following amalgamation in 1881, The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) quickly built up a solid reputation as a fighting regiment. During the First World War it raised 27 battalions and during the Second World War its battalions served in Europe and Burma. In the course of its long history, the regiment provided the British Army with many distinguished soldiers including three field marshals: Viscounts Hill and Wolseley and Sir Evelyn Wood. Always tough and enduring in battle, it reflected the character of its main recruitment area - Glasgow and Lanarkshire - and in later years it took self-conscious pride when the Germans nicknamed its soldiers Giftzwerge, or poison dwarfs. The Cameronians puts its story into the context of British military history and makes use of personal testimony to reveal the life of the regiment.

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Customer Reviews

The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) were one of those hard fighting British line regiments that you never hear too much about, yet were always somehow in the thick of the fighting. As a Lowland Scottish Regiment they did not have the celebrity status of the later Highland regiments. They were cousins to the much older Royal Scots and were contemporaries of the King's Own Scottish Borderers. Raised in 1689 from the strict old Covenanters of the Presbyterian faith, they were a regiment of unique origins in the British army. As a fringe Protestant faith, the regiment retained many of the religious traditions of this very austere group. One of these was Convening a Convencant, or religious service outdoors, a left-over from the early followers who were frequently persecuted for their beliefs. Guards were usually posted for these services and the Cameronians established the practice as a regimental tradition. No doubt they were one of the most religious regiments within the army. The regiment first saw service in the political strife of the 1690s against the Jacobite pretensions to the English Crown. From there they moved on to fight with the great Marlborough in his legendary battles that so humbled the aspirations of the French under Louis XIV. The 26th Foot, as they became known were involved in the early phases of the American Revolution where small detachments of the regiment were captured by Ethan Allen at Ticonderoga in 1775 and shortly afterwards when the rebels made their abortive drive into Canada at St. Johns outside Montreal. Reformed, the regiment saw further service in the Rev War and would continue through the wars of Napoleon, the Crimea and the numerous little conflicts of the British Empire.

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