

HIS MAJESTY'S SCOTS GUARDS

THOUGH 300 years of British history lie behind the Scots Guards, the regimental papers were all destroyed by fire in 1841, and it is difficult now to unfold the full story.

We do know that the regiment was raised in Scotland by the first Marquess of Argyll (beheaded in 1661) under letters patent from Charles the First in 1642—on the basis of another regiment raised by him in 1639. They were raised for the purpose of suppressing the Irish Rebellion, being paid for doing so by the English Exchequer, for England had no men of its own available at the time.

Regiment "Goes English"

During the year following the regiment's coming on the establishment (1707), the first English officer was appointed, and soon the regiment was under a distinct handicap. Much of the recruiting of what should have been a Scot-

tish regiment was done in England, and within twenty years more than half the officers were English. The regiment thus lost much of its character.

The music suffered in common with other things, for when the regiment "went English" the pipes were scrapped and the usual "twelve hautboys" of the Foot Guards were adopted—not attested men, but men hired by the month. Once changes began they came quickly, and soon the bassoon was found supplying the bass in place of the "courtial." Next came alterations in the "top line," and the clarinet ousted the oboe as the melody instrument.

Scots Replaced by Germans

About half-way through the eighteenth century the Scots Guards Band was dismissed—history does not tell us whether its playing was the cause—and was replaced by a band of twenty-four Germans with all the latest instruments, including serpents and French horns. Along with the Germans came three black men, one carrying Turkish bells and the other two tambourines. The gentleman of the bells was known as "Jingling Johnnie"!

When Sergeant Evan Henderson was sent to the Crimea as pipe major in 1853, with five pipers, he was "not on the establishment," and when he paraded in London and at Windsor he was burlesqued by "Punch," whose attitude apparently made an inspecting officer demand the withdrawal of pipers. They were restored, on appeal, by Queen Victoria.

Yet twelve years later the Adjutant-General intervened against them again, till the Scots in the regiment organised an opposition, which made him withdraw his request. Not until 1928 did the pipers officially get feather bonnets, which were presented to both battalions by King George. That is a symbol of the fact that the Scots Guards have been reverting, regimentally, to their original Scottishness.

Bandmasters

The first of the ten successive bandmasters of whom we have definite knowledge was a clarinettist named John Mahon, who was born in 1755. Edward Hopkins, another equally brilliant clarinettist (in fact one of the world's best), was next appointed bandmaster in 1797; he was in charge of the band in 1815, when the Brigade of Guards had their bands in Paris.

In 1838 he was succeeded by William Hardy, a one-time famous cornopean player. In 1842 Mr. Hardy retired, and Carl Boose succeeded. He was a cultured

musician, a military band reformer and a thorough master of all branches of his art, and soon proved a tower of strength to the Scots Guards.

When Boose was transferred to control the Royal Horse Guards (Blues) Band in 1859, Charles Godfrey, third son of an even more famous Charles Godfrey, was appointed. At the age of 19 he was the youngest bandmaster in the whole service. By a coincidence he was transferred to "The Blues" in 1869, again following his predecessor, Carl Boose.

Sixty-six Able Musicians

A Dutch musician, J. C. Van Maanen, succeeded, but six years later (in 1875) he exchanged posts with J. P. Clarke, of the Dublin Royal Irish Constabulary Band. In 1887 Clarke retired on account of ill-health, and Edward Holland was appointed. On his retirement in 1893 Henry Dunkerton reigned for three years. Lieut. F. W. Wood succeeded, to be succeeded in turn by Lieut. H. E. Dowell, and under him the band has never looked back.

There are in the band to-day no fewer than 66 able musicians, from whom a symphony orchestra of 46 members is available. During the Great War the band performed its tour of service with the Guards at Ypres, the Somme, and at Cologne. It toured Canada in 1912 and 1922 with great success. It is certainly now one of the leading bands of the Empire.

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