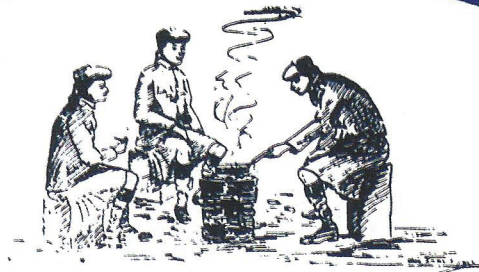


# THE BRAZIER



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- VANCOUVER ISLAND -  
Victoria, Nanaimo and Courtenay/Comox

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The Canadian Scottish Regiment  
(Princess Mary's)

*100th Anniversary 1912 - 2012*

**SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY EDITION**  
**OCTOBER 2012**

## The History of the 88th Regiment (Victoria Fusiliers)... *continued from page 3*

In 1905, Canada had an establishment of about 1000 all ranks in the regular army and from that time until 1914 the force barely reached 3000 all ranks. The non permanent Militia, between 1904 and 1913 was estimated that, men under training totalled about 55,000. This does not take into account the volunteer units raised and sent to participate in the Boer War in South Africa.

It was in this atmosphere of tension that events took place which led to the raising of several infantry regiments in Canada of which the Victoria Fusiliers was one and became the 88th Regiment of Canadian Infantry.

This story properly begins in the autumn of 1983 when the Rector, the Rev. Errol Shilliday and his wife, Hilda found the Colours of the 88 Regiment (Victoria Fusiliers) in the organ loft of St. Mary's Church in Oak Bay. It was in this atmosphere of tension that events took place which led to the raising of several infantry regiments in Canada of which the Victoria Fusiliers was one and became the 88th Regiment of Canadian Infantry.

The fabric of the Colours was in very poor shape. With great care Errol and Hilda did much to restore the Colours and provide protective sheathing before they were displayed on their proper staffs in the Chapel where they now proudly hang.

The following is the story of the Victoria Fusiliers and its connection with Parish of St. Mary's in Oak Bay.

The 88th Regiment was gazetted for formation in Ottawa on 7 November 1912. It was to be organized as an eight company Regiment of infantry in the Military District No.11 with HQ at Victoria, BC. The authorized strength would be 410 all ranks. Major Beale was appointed Adjutant and the HQ of the Regiment would be in the Drill Hall on Menzies Street.

Prior to the above announcement, meetings took place in Victoria on the proposal of an infantry Regiment being formed in the City.

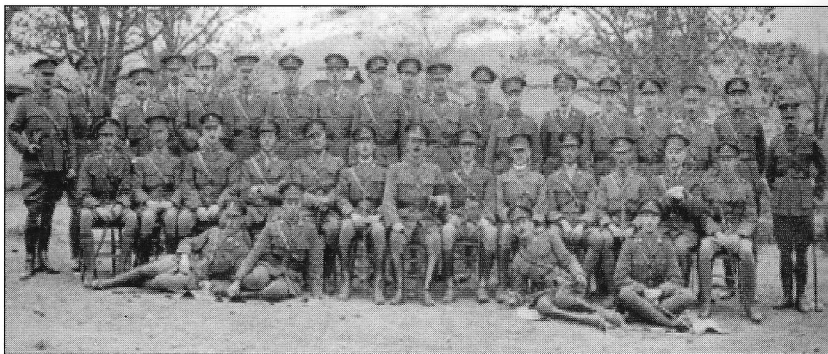
On 7th March 1912 under the chairmanship of Mayor Beckwith, a meeting was held and it was generally

agreed that the above proposal should be supported and that an executive committee should be formed. After discussion, the following were appointed: Mayor Beckwith, Capt. De Salis, Bruce Bowley, R.V. Harvey, Mr. Jessop, W.G. Cunningham and Major Beale. It was also agreed that the name of this unit should be;

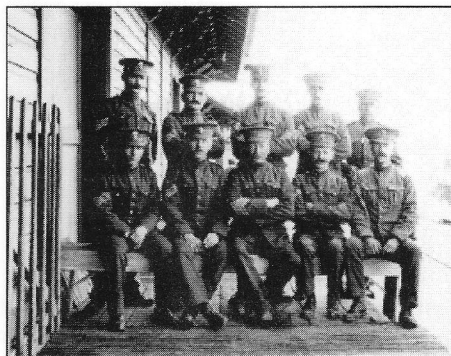
### The City of Victoria Regiment of Fusiliers.

This name was chosen as a tribute to the 7th The Royal Fusiliers, who in 1886 formed part of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers along with other Fusilier Regiments, 5th Northumberland, 6th Warwickshire, and the (XX) Lancashire.

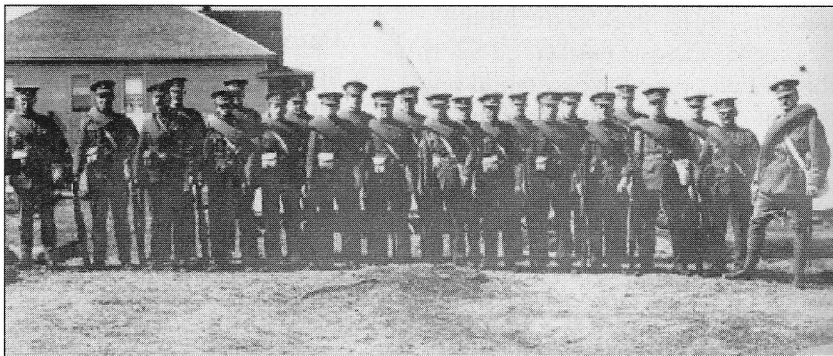
A number of prominent citizens promised support including, Premier McBride, A.C. McPhillips, KC and Mr. McGregor of the Board of Trade [J. Herrick McGregor later 16th Bn]



Officers 88th Victoria Fusiliers



Sergeants 88th Victoria Fusilliers



Soldiers 88th Victoria Fusilliers

Further support came from the other militia unit in Victoria, the 5th Regiment Canadian Garrison Artillery who's Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. A.W. Currie attended the meeting and proposed a resolution for the formation of the Fusiliers. This was approved.

It was also approved that the command of the Fusiliers should be Lt. Col. John Hall and that Major Beale should be appointed Adjutant. The meeting then discussed problems of finance, dress and recruiting.

The formation and recruiting started on Thursday, 21 Nov 1912 when Major Beale opened HQ and began the enlisting of volunteers, previously, certain officers had received commissions and an Officers Mess was established in the Ritz Hotel on Fort Street.

The first parade of the Victoria Fusiliers was held 10 April 1913.

## First World War

The Victoria Fusiliers were placed on active service on 10 Aug 1914, for local protective duty. It trained and provided reinforcements for other Canadian units overseas. On 23 Apr 1916, the Victoria Fusiliers contingent, Lt.Col. Rous Cullin commanding, embarked on the Princess Charlotte sailing from Esquimalt.

On arrival in England the Regiment was sent to Otterpool Camp in Kent where it remained for the rest of the War. As a unit it never saw action, but it was used as a reinforcement depot for the replacement of casualties in other Canadian infantry regiments in France.

After the War, in 1919, the Victoria Fusiliers returned to Canada. In 1920, the Regiment was Amalgamated with the 50th Regiment, The Canadian Scottish (Princess Mary's) in Victoria.

On 14 Nov 1920, at St. Mary's Church, in Oak Bay, a memorial service was held for the Regiment and the Colours were presented for dedication and safe keeping.



*An extract of a report in the Victoria Daily Times on Monday, 15 Nov 1920 is given below.*

“Impressive tribute to the members of the 88th Regiment, the Victoria Fusiliers, who gave their lives during the Great War, was paid at the memorial service held last evening in St. Mary's Church in Oak Bay. The Church was filled to capacity with relatives and friends of the fallen heroes. Representatives of the I.O.D.E. and of the various returned soldiers organizations were also there. The Lieutenant Governor was present and among the military representatives were Brigadier Ross, CMG and Col. John Hall, former Commanding Officer of the Regiment.

During the service, the Colours of the Regiment were then presented to the Church and the memorial tablet to the Fusiliers is a replica of the one erected in the Parliament Buildings [Legislature] was dedicated.

Col. The Rev. G.H. Andrews, Rector of the Church and Chaplain of the Regiment, conducted the impressive service and officiated at the touching little ceremony.

In an eloquent address, Col. Andrews briefly reviewed the history of the 88th Victoria Fusiliers through which regiment 4500 men had passed overseas.

The Colours had been presented to the Regiment in August 1914 by the Victoria members of the I.O.D.E.

and their consecration took place at Willows Camp in April 1916, on the eve of the departure of the 88th Regiment for overseas.

Now that the 88th Victoria Fusiliers no longer existed, continued the Rector, it had been decided that nor more fitting place for the resting place of the Colours could be found than in St. Mary's Church, where so many of the men had worshipped before leaving for the front.

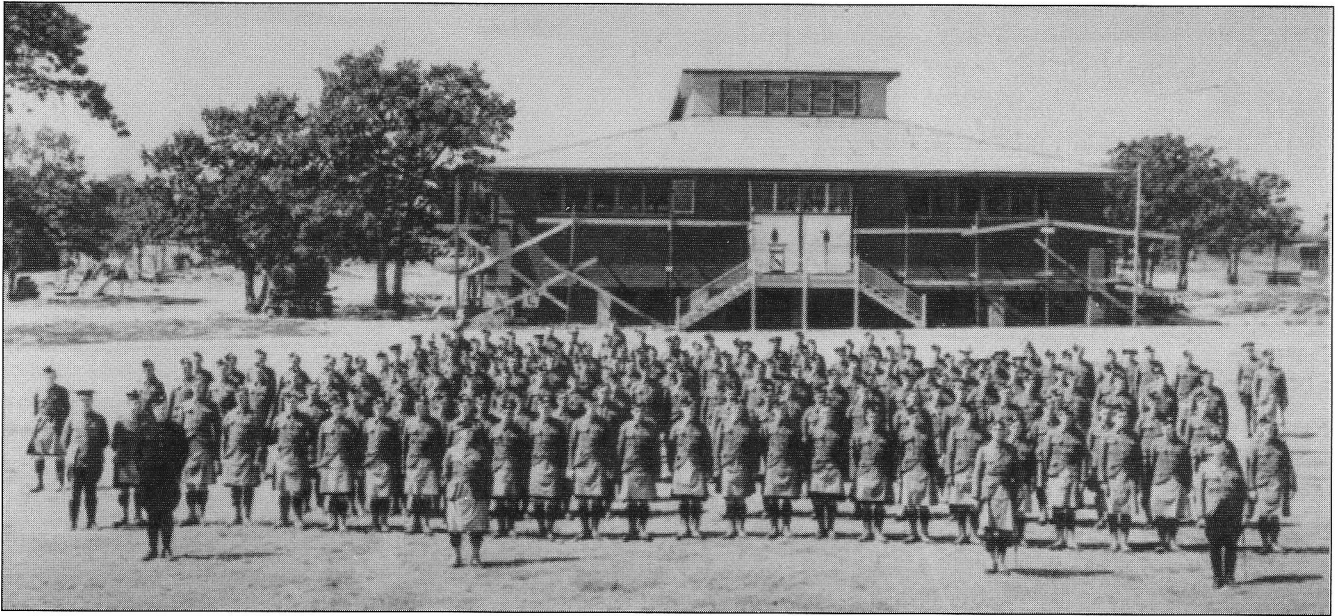
He referred with pride to the “Esprit de corps” of the Regiment and declared that though the Colours were not inscribed with any names, the actions in which the men had fought would go down in history with such glorious names as Inkerman and other victories of the Empire.”

The Colours are particularly handsome having been ordered long before the War by I.O.D.E. and made at the Kensington School of Art in London, England.

Fifty years later, a reunion was held at the Strathcona Hotel in Victoria on Saturday 21 May 1966. This commemorated the date of the departure of the Regiment from Victoria for overseas.

*Editors note:* this is a copy of a letter written to the Rector of St Mary's Church in 1986 by Lt Col C.H. Boulton, MBE, TD, CD late (XX) The Lancashire Fusiliers, The Nigeria Regiment (RWAFF) and The Canadian Grenadier Guards. (probably a parishioner)

# How the 50th Gordon Highlanders Began



When war broke out in 1914, contingents from the following four regiments made up the 16th Battalion (Canadian Scottish) C.E.F. – The Argyle [sic] and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada (Princess Louise's) from Hamilton, Ontario, formed in 1903; The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1910; The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, Vancouver, 1911; and The 50th Regiment (Gordon Highlanders of Canada) Victoria, 1914.

The three senior regiments are still serving today under their original names. The Camerons and Seaforths both sent their own battalions, the 43rd and 72nd respectively, later in the war. It fell to the junior formation in Victoria to have the honour of perpetuating the now famous 16th Canadian Scottish. This meant disbandment and change of name and tartan.

When the 88th Regiment (Victoria Fusiliers) was formed in 1912, it was felt by a large number of people in Victoria who were of Scottish origin or descent that this was mainly for the English section in the community, and that they too, should be represented.

The upshot was a series of meetings, the first of which, according to press reports, was called by a Captain Chambers to discuss the formation of a Highland Regiment in Victoria.

In July 1913, Colonel Sam Hughes, Minister of Militia, was in Victoria accompanied by General Sir Ian Hamilton (an old Gordon Highlander, veteran of Khartoum, Majuba Hill and Ladysmith, and future Commander-in-Chief of the ill-fated Gallipoli expedition) who was touring the Empire in his professional capacity.

In August came the sanction of the Minister of Militia, and on 4 September an official announcement from Ottawa authorized the new Highland regiment. On the same day the first fifteen or twenty men were sworn in, although the regiment was not yet actually in being, and was temporarily administered by a civilian committee.

On 25 October it was announced that Lieut.-Col. Arthur Currie, of the 5th Regiment C.G.A. would be appointed to command. To this he had consented after some misgivings on his part, but he allowed his doubts to be overcome by the earnest pleadings of the proponents of the new regiment. His command of the 5th Regiment was about to expire.

On the next day Major Lorne Ross was appointed Second-in-Command, and Major Garnett Hughes (only son of the Minister) as junior major. The Caledonia Society offered their full support.

During early November, Peter J. Riddell was appointed Quartermaster and Dr. David Donald became medical officer. Capt. R.P. Clark of the 5th Regiment was transferred to the 50th to be adjutant as from 1st January, 1914.

On the 21st Mr. W.H. Coy became Honorary Lieut. Colonel. He promptly gave \$25,000 to the Regiment, with which full uniform and equipment was purchased, much of which is still in use today as Guards of Honour.

The Daily Colonist, Victoria, reported that, on 2 December, a Caledonia Club dinner was held at the Empress Hotel on St. Andrew's night, at which Hon. Lieut.-Colonel Coy and Lieut. Colonel Currie responded to the toast to the Gordon Highlanders. On Christmas day, 1913, the same paper mentions a turkey-shoot held by the 50th Gordons

On 19 December Lieut. Col. Currie, who had been on leave from the 5th Regiment since November, completed his term of command of that unit.



On 14 January, 1914, he formally took over his new Regiment, and the active militia life and training of the Gordons commenced in earnest.

Short indeed was the time vouchsafed to Victoria to admire their resplendent uniforms- tall white-plumed feather-bonnets, scarlet or white shell doublets, gold lace and snowy pipeclayed equipment – eight months later they were mobilized for war!

By 1914, just as their successors the 1st Battalion Canadian Scottish, together with the 2nd Battalion, were to do again in 1939, they filled a large number of guard duties in remote districts; these in addition to sending their original contingent to Valcartier which subsequently became No. 1 Company of the 16th Canadian Scottish, C.E.F.

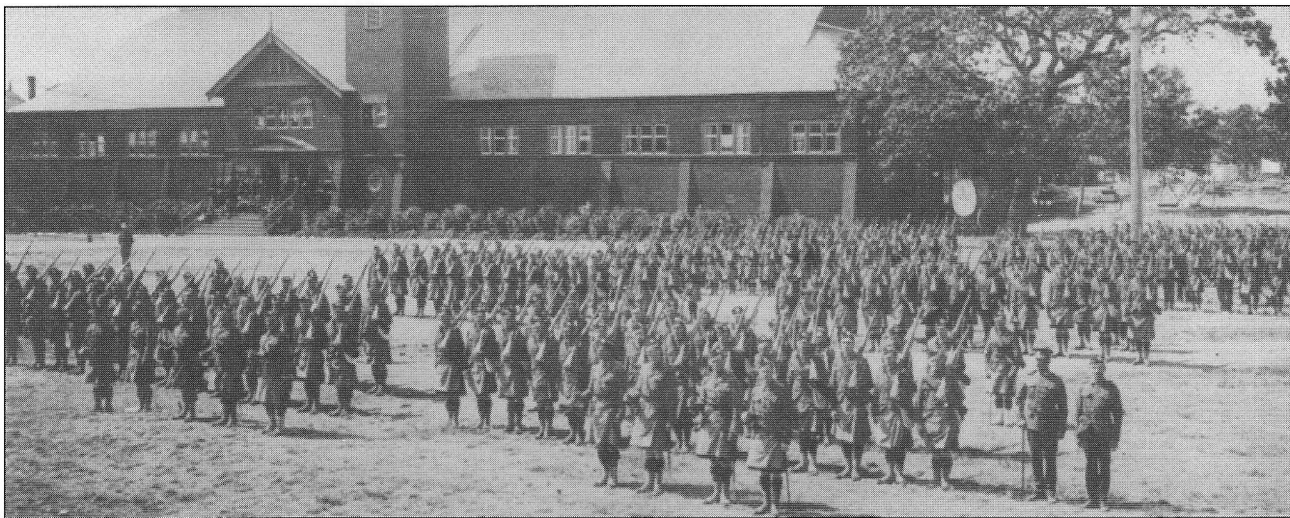
Their Commanding Officer, Lieut.-Col. Currie, was immediately appointed to command a brigade, eventually rising to lead the Canadian Corps to victory in the field and to attain the highest rank this Dominion had to offer.



Attempts were made by the Regiment to raise an overseas battalion of its own, but without success. They were fated to remain throughout the war as a mobilized militia unit, still filling guard duties and sending drafts to newly-raised battalions such as the 30th, 48th and 67th (Western Scots). When, eventually a depot for B.C. was formed at the Willows Camp in 1917, the Gordons still maintained their organization, their drafts into the overseas formation retaining their kilts.

Besides the considerable regimental property they left an unquenchable spirit to their successors; they may be envied that they survived the Great War without being “pooled” or otherwise losing their identity – as they certainly would have in 1939-45.

# World War I



*The 50th Regiment, Gordon Highlanders on parade at the Willows in Victoria, 1914.*

The 50th Regiment “Highlanders” was placed on active service on 6 August 1914 for local protection duties.

The 88th Regiment Victoria Fusiliers was placed on active service on 6 August 1914 for local protection duties.

The 16th Battalion, which was authorized on 1 September 1914 as the ‘16th Battalion, CEF’, embarked for Britain on 28 September 1914. It disembarked in France on 15 February 1915, where it fought as part of the 3rd Infantry Brigade, 1st Canadian Division in France and Flanders until the end of the war. The battalion was disbanded on 30 August 1920.

The 48th Battalion, which was authorized on 7 November 1914 as the ‘48th Battalion, CEF’, embarked for Britain on 1 July 1915.

It was converted to pioneer and re-designated: ‘3rd Canadian Pioneer Battalion, CEF’ on 6 January 1916. It disembarked in France on 9 March 1916, where it served as part of the 3rd Canadian Division in France

and Flanders until 17 April 1917, when its personnel were absorbed by the Canadian Corps in the field. The battalion was disbanded on 30 August 1920.

The 67th Battalion, which was authorized on 20 April 1915 as the ‘67th “Overseas” Battalion, CEF’, embarked for Britain on 1 April 1916. It was converted to pioneer and re-designated the ‘67th Canadian (Pioneer) Battalion, CEF’ on 15 May 1916. It disembarked in France on 14 August 1916, where it served as part of the 4th Canadian Division in France and Flanders until 28 April 1917, when its personnel were absorbed by the Canadian Corps in the field. The battalion was disbanded on 30 August 1920.

The 88th Battalion, which was authorized on 22 December 1915 as the ‘88th “Overseas” Battalion, CEF’, embarked for Britain on 31 May 1916. It provided re-enforcements for the Canadian Corps in the field until 18 July 1916, when its personnel were absorbed by the ‘30th Reserve Battalion, CEF’. The

battalion was disbanded on 1 September 1917.

The 103rd Battalion, which was authorized on 22 December 1915 as the ‘103rd “Overseas” Battalion, CEF’, embarked for Britain on 23 July 1916. It provided reinforcements for the Canadian Corps in the field until 7 January 1917, when its personnel were absorbed by the ‘16th Reserve Battalion, CEF’. The battalion was disbanded on 1 September 1917.

The 143rd Battalion, which was authorized on 22 December 1915 as the ‘143rd “Overseas” Battalion, CEF’, embarked for Britain on 17 February 1917. Its personnel were absorbed by the ‘24th Reserve Battalion, CEF’ and the ‘Canadian Railway Troops Training Depot’ on 15 March 1917 to provide reinforcements to the Canadian Corps in the field. The battalion was disbanded on 4 April 1918.