



## INTRODUCTION

In 1914 the young – and not so young – men of Scotland joined the military in droves, and the Advocates were no exception. For many of them, part time military service had been a significant part of their leisure time; indeed the vast majority of the men in this publication had served in uniform before 1914. Some of them, like Robert Burns Begg KC, or Archibald Jones, had served in the Boer War. Others, like Jim Henderson-Hamilton, had joined a local territorial battalion, possibly for social or work reasons as much as military ones.

The average age of the Advocates who were killed in the war was well over the national average, at 37. Some were positive veterans, like James Ferguson, Senior, at 60, although he did not actually die on active service. However the 56 year old James Clark was killed leading his men in a charge. At the other end of the spectrum were young men like 24 year old George Buchanan Smith.

In the Nineteenth Century, many Advocates had been sons of landed gentry, and certainly many on the war memorial fit that description. However, the occupations of their fathers were, by 1914, more varied; salvage engineers, rubber manufacturers, and shipbuilders rub shoulders with coconut plantation owners and thread manufacturers. Many came from legal backgrounds; indeed eight of the twenty two had Advocates, Writers to the Signet, and Sheriffs as fathers. All were well educated, some in traditional Scottish High schools, others in Scottish or English private schools.

Also on the war memorial are four “Intrants”, with an average age of 30. Before the war, and indeed for many years after it, a would-be Advocate needed to pass or obtain exemption from examinations by obtaining both an arts degree, and a law degree. Commonly an Intrans would then serve time in a solicitor’s office, before taking a public examination at the Faculty of Advocates, which involved writing a thesis on Justinian’s Institutes in Latin, and answering legal questions in Latin. An Intrans also had to spend one year, after satisfying the Faculty on his education, not being engaged in legal or commercial activity; presumably this was meant to ensure that the Intrans could survive with no or little income.

Every one of the Advocates in this paper joined the Army; there were no Naval or Royal Flying Corps deaths. Most were killed in France or Belgium, but three died at Gallipoli or Malta, and four died in the United Kingdom. All, without exception, were officers, ranging from Colonel to Second Lieutenant. Most served in Scottish Regiments, the favourite by far being the Royal Scots; only one served in an English regiment, albeit the Border Regiment. Two of the Intrans were in the Royal Field Artillery.

The Battle of Loos, on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1915, was a particularly dark day for the Faculty. Five Advocates or Intrans were killed.

On the war memorial is the name of one Advocate who was killed in action in the Second World War, and it would be wrong not to recognise the sacrifice of this gentleman, James Archibald MacDonald.

Each death was of course a tragedy, but some echo of individual loss can be heard in the words or actions of survivors. Consider, for instance, Mrs Lyon of North Berwick who by 1918 had lost her husband and five of her six children; or the Reverend Henderson-Hamilton who erected a stained glass window in his church to remember his wife and sons.

On 26<sup>th</sup> May 1921, the war memorial, designed by Robert Lorimer, was unveiled by Lord Clyde, the Lord Justice General. Lord Clyde had been the Dean of the Faculty during the

war years and in the words of The Scotsman, "None knew better, none appreciated more fully, the sacrifices that were made."

The Faculty in 1914 had been relatively small, of its 400 or so members no less than 163 (Advocates and Intrants) had served in the armed forces, this despite many being "of an age incompatible with war service." Many others had been engaged in other variations of national service. The death rate was around 16% of those who served.

Alastair Shepherd WS  
23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016

Note – It helps to know how the Army was organised in 1914 -1918. The smallest unit was a Platoon, usually led by a Second Lieutenant and comprising about 30 men. A Company was composed of 4 Platoons, usually led by a Captain; and a Battalion would be composed of four companies and led by a Colonel. Battalions were grouped into Brigades, usually 4 or 5 battalions per brigade and as the name suggests, led by a Brigadier; and lastly four or five Brigades made up a Division. Divisions were often geographically organised, for instance the 9<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 51<sup>st</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Divisions were composed almost entirely of Scottish troops and these Divisions feature heavily in this publication.

It is also helpful to know that the Battalions of the pre-war professional Army are referred to in this publication as "regular"; the pre-war amateur Battalions are referred to as "territorial"; and the volunteer and conscript Battalions are known as "new army". Regular battalions were involved from August 1914; Territorial battalions joined the fray from the summer of 1915; and new army battalions comprised of volunteers were on active service from May 1915, with conscripts appearing in late 1916. The vast majority of Advocates were in territorial units.

**Non Military Information**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>DATE ADMITTED TO FACULTY</b>	<b>ASSOCIATED LAW FIRM</b>	<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>OCCUPATION OF FATHER</b>
NAPIER ARMIT	36	March 1904	Beveridge Sutherland and Smith WS (Leith)	George Watson's College Edinburgh University	Salvage Engineer
ROBERT BURNS-BEGG	45	July 1895		Privately Educated/ Stranraer School, Bournemouth Edinburgh University	Sheriff Clerk
ALEXANDER BROWN	34	November 1908	Cowan Clapperton and Barclay (Glasgow)	Glasgow Academy Glasgow University	Minister in Church of Scotland
JOHN RUSSEL BRUCE	33	July 1911		Edinburgh Academy Edinburgh University	Writer to the Signet
VINCENT CONNELL BRUCE	27	March 1914		George Watson's College Oxford University Edinburgh University	Doctor (Medicine)
JAMES CLARK	56	December 1883		Paisley Grammar School Lycee, Pau Glasgow University	Thread Manufacturer
JAMES SMITH CLARK	34	March 1902		Royal High School Edinburgh University	Auditor of Court of Session
JAMES FERGUSON, Senior	60	July 1879		Birkenhead Craigmount Edinburgh University	Director of Great North of Scotland Railway Company
JAMES FERGUSON, Junior	30	July 1913		Edinburgh Academy Charterhouse Edinburgh University	Advocate
IVOR FORSYTH-GRANT	27	December 1913	J & F Anderson WS (Edinburgh)	Edinburgh Academy Edinburgh University	Advocate
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>ASSOCIATED</b>	<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>OCCUPATION OF</b>

		<b>ADMITTED TO FACULTY</b>	<b>LAW FIRM</b>		<b>FATHER</b>
JAMES COOK GRAY	26	March 1916			Solicitor
JAMES CAMPBELL HENDERSON-HAMILTON	31	July 1907		Trinity College, Glenalmond Edinburgh University Glasgow University	Minister (Episcopal Church)
ARCHIBALD WILSON JONES	49	December 1894	Davidson & Syme WS (Edinburgh)	Marlborough Edinburgh University	Officer in HM Forces
JAMES OGILVIE KEMP	52	March 1889		Aberdeen New Grammar School	Wine Merchant, Keith
WILLIAM HARRISON KIRKLAND	30	March 1908		Ayr Academy Edinburgh University	Merchant, Dundee
WILLIAM LOWSON	32	July 1908		George Watson's College Edinburgh University	Shipbuilder, Belfast
DAVID LYELL	27	July 1914	Hope Todd & Kirk WS (Edinburgh)	Merchiston Castle Balliol College, Oxford Edinburgh University	Writer to the Signet
WALTER SCOTT STUART LYON	28	December 1912		Haileybury Balliol College, Oxford Edinburgh University	Architect
ARTHUR STANLEY PRINGLE	38	July 1902	MacPherson & Mackay WS (Edinburgh)	Edinburgh Academy Trinity College, Cambridge Edinburgh University	Writer to the Signet
JOHN SMALL	30	July 1913	Warden & Grant SSC (Edinburgh) Wright Johnston & MacKenzie (Glasgow)	Dundee High School St Andrews University Edinburgh University	Chemist and Coconut Plantation Owner, Jamaica
ALEXANDER TAYLOR	45	November 1896	Robertson, Low, Robertson & Cross (Glasgow)	Glasgow Academy Glasgow University	Manufacturer
<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>ASSOCIATED</b>	<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>OCCUPATION OF</b>

		<b>ADMITTED TO FACULTY</b>	<b>LAW FIRM</b>		<b>FATHER</b>
GEORGE MUIR THORNTON	36	March 1910	Menzies, Bruce-Low and Thomson WS (Edinburgh)	Merchiston Castle Trinity College, Oxford Edinburgh University	India Rubber Manufacturer
			<b>INTRANTS</b>		
<b>INTRANTS</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>DATE OF PETITION</b>	<b>ASSOCIATED LAW FIRM</b>	<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>OCCUPATION OF FATHER</b>
DAVID ALEXANDER BEVERIDGE	28	July 1914		St Ninian's, Moffat Loretto Pembroke College, Cambridge Edinburgh University	Linen Manufacturer, Dunfermline
JAMES BRUCE	29	May 1911			Landowner
GILBERT THOMAS GORDON	38	October 1900			Merchant, St John's, Newfoundland
GEORGE BUCHANAN-SMITH	24	July 1914		Glasgow Academy, Glasgow University, Aberdeen University	Professor of Theology, and Principal, University of Aberdeen
			<b>SECOND WORLD WAR</b>		
JAMES ARCHIBALD MACDONALD	30			Cambridge University, Edinburgh University	

### Military Information

NAME	RANK	REGIMENT INITIALLY JOINED	REGIMENT AT DATE OF DEATH	CWGC CEMETERY or MEMORIAL	DATE OF DEATH
NAPIER ARMIT	Captain	16 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	16 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	Thiepval Memorial	4 August 1916
ROBERT BURNS-BEGG	Colonel	n/a	War Office, General Staff	Kinross West Burial Ground	9 January 1918
ALEXANDER BROWN	Second Lieutenant	16 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	16 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	Arras Memorial	28 April 1917
JOHN RUSSEL BRUCE	Major	15 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	15 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	Thiepval Memorial	1 July 1916
VINCENT CONNELL BRUCE	Lieutenant	13 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	5 <sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders	Arras Memorial	26 March 1916
JAMES CLARK	Lieutenant Colonel	9 <sup>th</sup> Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders	9 <sup>th</sup> Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders	Brandhoek Military Cemetery, Ypres	10 May 1915
JAMES SMITH CLARK	Second Lieutenant	6 <sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders	5 <sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders	Arras Memorial	3 May 1917
JAMES FERGUSON, Senior	Colonel	9 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	9 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	N/A	26 April 1917
JAMES FERGUSON, Junior	Major	9 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	9 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	Thiepval Memorial	22 July 1916
IVOR FORSYTH-GRANT	Lieutenant	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lovat Scouts	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lovat Scouts	Lala Baba Cemetery, Gallipoli	19 October 1915
JAMES COOK GRAY	Captain	2 <sup>nd</sup> HLI	11 <sup>th</sup> Border Regiment	Hospital Farm Cemetery, Ypres	22 December 1917
JAMES CAMPBELL HENDERSON-HAMILTON	Lieutenant	9 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	9 <sup>th</sup> Black Watch	Dud Corner Cemetery, Loos	27 September 1915
ARCHIBALD WILSON JONES	Lieutenant Colonel	4 <sup>th</sup> HLI	4 <sup>th</sup> HLI	Pontblyddyn (Christ Church) Churchyard, Flintshire	22 February 1917
JAMES OGILVIE KEMP	Captain	5 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	19 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	Crosthwaite (St Kentigern) Churchyard, Cumbria	12 December 1917
WILLIAM HARRISON KIRKLAND	Captain	7 <sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders	7 <sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders	Loos Memorial	25 September 1915
<b>NAME</b>	<b>RANK</b>	<b>REGIMENT</b>	<b>REGIMENT</b>	<b>CWGC</b>	<b>DATE OF</b>

		<b>JOINED</b>	<b>AT DATE OF DEATH</b>	<b>CEMETERY OR MEMORIAL</b>	<b>DEATH</b>
WILLIAM LOWSON	Second Lieutenant	5 <sup>th</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	8 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	Puchevillers British Cemetery, Amiens	17 November 1916
DAVID LYELL	Second Lieutenant	7 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	7 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	Helles Memorial, Gallipoli	12 July 1915
WALTER SCOTT STUART LYON	Lieutenant	9 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	9 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial	8 May 1915
ARTHUR STANLEY PRINGLE	Captain	4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	10 <sup>th</sup> Cameronians	Loos Memorial	25 September 1915
JOHN SMALL	Lieutenant	15 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	9 <sup>th</sup> Black Watch	Vermelles British Cemetery, Lens	29 April 1916
ALEXANDER TAYLOR	Captain	9 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	9 <sup>th</sup> Royal Scots	Level Crossing Cemetery, Fampoux	21 April 1917
GEORGE MUIR THORNTON	Captain	10 <sup>th</sup> Seaforth Highlanders	8 <sup>th</sup> Seaforth Highlanders	Tyne Cot Memorial	22 August 1917
			<b>INTRANTS</b>		
DAVID ALEXANDER BEVERIDGE	Second Lieutenant	Royal Field Artillery	Royal Field Artillery	Pieta Military Cemetery, Malta	13 September 1915
JAMES BRUCE	Captain	Royal Field Artillery	Royal Field Artillery	Poperinghe Military Cemetery	25 July 1917
GILBERT THOMAS GORDON	Second Lieutenant	Royal Newfoundland Regiment	8 <sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders	Chocques Military Cemetery, Bethune	28 September 1915
GEORGE BUCHANAN-SMITH	Second Lieutenant	1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Gordon Highlanders	2 <sup>nd</sup> Gordon Highlanders	Loos Memorial	25 September 1915
			<b>SECOND WORLD WAR</b>		
JAMES ARCHIBALD MACDONALD	Captain	5 <sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders	5 <sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders	Alamein Memorial, Egypt	22 October 1942

**NAPIER ARMIT  
1880-1916**



**CAPTAIN, 16<sup>th</sup> ROYAL SCOTS**

Born in Broughty Ferry to salvage engineer Thomas Napier Armit and Mary Ann Armit, Armit was educated at George Watson's College in Edinburgh. His father had been heavily involved in the salvage of material from the Tay Bridge, but his parents later moved to Edinburgh.

After Watson's, Armit studied law at Edinburgh University between 1901 and 1903. He was a Bar Apprentice with Beveridge, Sutherland and Smith WS, and was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in March 1904. In the 1911 Census he was lodging with another Advocate at 11 Castle Street, Edinburgh – a brief walk from Parliament Square.

Following the outbreak of war, he joined the 16<sup>th</sup> ("McCrae's") Battalion, Royal Scots in December 1914. The battalion had been formed in November by Lt-Col George McCrae. Initially a Private, within a month Armit was a Second Lieutenant and by the time of his death he had been promoted to Captain. He was the editor of a battalion newspaper called "The Weakly Rumour". McCrae's Battalion trained in Ripon from 29 May 1915. McCrae's had a fair smattering of lawyers; seven solicitors in the ranks, and eight with legal occupations among the officers, Armit and Alexander Brown being the only Advocates.

However, before he embarked for France, Armit returned to Edinburgh for a most important event. At the age of 35, he married 29 year old Jennie Mackie, whose father was the ship owner, Sir Richard Mackie. The wedding took place at the Mackie house at Trinity Grove, Trinity Road, Leith; his address was given as "Royal Scots Camp, Ripon".

After a brief honeymoon, he returned to Ripon and on 8 January 1916 sailed from Southampton to Le Havre. The travails of McCrae's Battalion are well documented in Jack Alexander's excellent book, but the Battalion's most bloody encounter of the war was to be

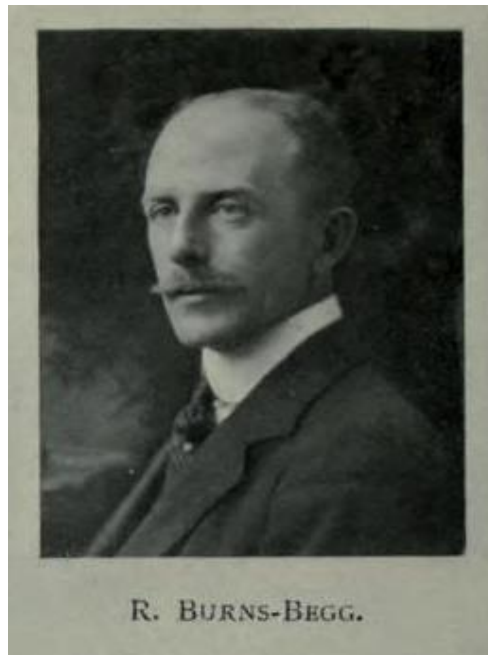
at the Battle of the Somme. Armit was in command of a Company of the Battalion on the first day of the Battle on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916, and succeeded in capturing the fourth line of the German trenches, thus achieving the objective set. The next day he won his Military Cross leading a bombing attack at Scots Redoubt.

The Somme Battle rumbled on despite the horrific losses on the first day, but on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1916 Armit was killed in action while leading "B" Company on an attack on a German position with the mundane name of Intermediate Trench, just north of Bazentin-le-petit. To quote from Alexander's book, "At 0451 the whistles blew. Both companies climbed over the parapet and advanced 30 paces. At that point the machine guns opened fire. Armit was on the left, leading his bombers. He got as far as the German wire, where he was shot through the head." Only one member of the company reached the objective.

Sir George McCrae selected two companies to attack Intermediate Trench; one was B Company under Captain Armit. To quote the official history of the Royal Scots – "unfortunately the plan miscarried. The Royal Scots lost their way in the darkness, and had to attack by daylight under the direct observation of the enemy machine gunners. The only officer to reach the trench was Lt. MacKenzie, who was promptly shot dead when he gained the objective." What had been a hard task became an impossible task when attempted in daylight.

Armit's name is remembered not only in the Advocates' Library memorial, but also on the massive Thiepval Memorial on the Somme; the Grange Cricket Club memorial; and in Newhaven Parish Church.

**ROBERT BURNS-BEGG KC  
1872-1918**



**COLONEL**

Colonel Burns-Begg had a distinguished military career, and although like some others on the war memorial he was not killed on active service, nonetheless he is commemorated there. Born in 1872, Burns-Begg was 45 years old when he died of pneumonia.

The Burns-Begg family were very proud of their connection to Robert Burns, being descended from Burns' sister Isabella. His grandfather was the schoolmaster in Kinross, and his father was the Sheriff Clerk of Kinross. Educated at the Stranraer School, Bournemouth, and thereafter at Edinburgh University, he graduated MA in 1892, later graduated LLB, and was admitted to the Faculty in July 1895.

According to the Scots Law Times, he "found the tedium of waiting for a practice but little in keeping with his energetic and adventurous spirit" and emigrated to Rhodesia. There he was called to the bar in Bulawayo, but while holidaying in South Africa the outbreak of the Boer War changed his career. Starting with the Cape Town Volunteers, he helped to raise and thereafter joined "Kitchener's Horse". This was an irregular unit of men from all parts of the globe who had been attracted to South Africa and the prospect of a fight with the Boer. In command of their machine gun section, he advanced up country in search of the enemy. He joined Lord Kitchener's staff as an Intelligence Officer and ended the war with the rank of Captain. Kitchener's Horse was involved in many of the skirmishes and sieges of the Boer War, but Burns-Begg's movements during the war are not known. Winston Churchill in his despatches from the front makes frequent mention of Kitchener's Horse.

At the end of the war, he returned briefly to Britain and married Ethel Tapply in Epsom in 1902.

He then returned to South Africa, and was appointed Legal Adviser to the Transvaal Government, taking silk in 1906, and was later made Commissioner of the Transvaal Police. He continued his military career by commanding the Transvaal Northern Mounted Rifles from 1904 to 1907; later the British Government appointed him Resident Commissioner for

Northern and Southern Rhodesia. When this appointment came to an end, he returned to this country just in time for the start of the Great War. After an Intelligence appointment in London, he proceeded to Folkestone to help organise the town, which was a major embarkation port for France. His official title was Colonel Commandant, Folkestone District. He was mentioned in Despatches in 1917.

Folkestone was a vital link in the war effort, and it was most important that the port operated efficiently. Some ten million troops and medical staff passed through the town on their way to the front. As many returned, wounded or looking forward to home leave. During the war years, Folkestone had an international population, with Canadians, Sikhs, and Chinese living cheek by jowl with Belgian refugees. Burns-Begg had a hard job keeping the troops and civilians out of trouble, and the municipal records mention frequent brawls and drunkenness in the town.

The strain of his job affected his health, and while on sick leave in Edinburgh he succumbed to pneumonia, dying at 9 Rothesay Place, home of the Advocate James Leadbetter, on 9 January 1918. He is buried at Kinross West Cemetery.

The Scots Law Times described his career as one of singularly varied achievement, and mentioned his charm of manner and gaiety of spirit; but also made it clear he was a strict disciplinarian.

Burns-Begg's name is inscribed on the war memorial in Sutton, London (his widow stayed there after the war), in Kinross Parish Church, as well as on the Faculty war memorial.

**ALEXANDER BROWN**  
**1883-1917**



**SECOND LIEUTENANT, 16<sup>th</sup> ROYAL SCOTS**

Alexander Brown was born in Glasgow, where his father was a Church of Scotland Minister. He was educated at Glasgow Academy and Glasgow University, graduating MA in 1903 and LLB in 1908. He trained at Messrs Cowan, Clapperton and Barclay in Glasgow and was admitted to the Faculty in November 1908.

He married Constance Bell in 1912.

A keen Liberal, Brown was very active in the party. According to the Scots Law Times, he showed great aptitude as a platform speaker, and during the two General Elections in 1910 he was to be found almost every night addressing large public audiences. He was treasurer of the Scottish Reform Club.

In June 1915 he was commissioned into the 16<sup>th</sup> (McCrae's) Battalion, the Royal Scots, the battalion favoured by his fellow Advocate Napier Armit. After training in Ripon, Brown did not sail immediately with his battalion to France in January 1916, but joined them later in June, just in time to prepare for the Somme offensive. The battalion were billeted at Becourt Wood, near Albert, just behind the front line. Both Armit and Brown survived the first day, but the battalion had been decimated; of the 21 officers and 793 other ranks that had initiated the assault, 12 officers and 573 other ranks were missing, wounded or killed.

Brown also survived the Battle of Arras between 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> April 1917, but on 28<sup>th</sup> April he was killed in the attack on Roeux, on the River Scarpe. This was just as disastrous as the Somme battle, and once again the battalion was reduced to a mere handful of officers and men. After the war, Brown's widow described his death as follows –“He was leading a

bombing party which was eventually driven back after very fierce fighting, and no trace has since been discovered.” The SLT mentions that he was wounded in the wrist, but instead of going back he carried on fighting, pulling the pins out of bombs with his teeth, until he was shot through the head by a sniper. His Commanding Officer wrote “The men felt they could rely on him absolutely, and he thus instilled great confidence into them. His labours for their welfare were unremitting, and they much appreciated what he did for their comfort.”

The Royal Scots' official history of the war states that from the moment the assault was unleashed, cohesion was lost, and although some groups of 16<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots reached the houses near the chemical works, this remnant did not have the strength to maintain its position, and only a few were able to extricate themselves from “the encircling foe” and make their way back to the British trenches.

The SLT describes him as a man of singular personal charm, kindness and fairness of mind.

Brown is remembered on the Arras Memorial, Glasgow Academy War Memorial, as well as the Faculty War Memorial.

**JOHN RUSSEL BRUCE**  
**1884-1916**



**MAJOR, 15<sup>th</sup> ROYAL SCOTS**

John Bruce was killed in action on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916, one of three Advocates who died on the Somme battlefield and are remembered on the massive Thiepval Memorial. However, Bruce was the only Advocate to die on the first day of the battle.

He was born at 23 St Bernard's Crescent, Edinburgh, the home of his father, James Bruce WS. After schooling at Edinburgh Academy, he graduated MA in 1907 and LLB in 1910. In July 1911 he was admitted to the Faculty.

Like many of his contemporaries, Bruce was very active in the Territorial Force. He enlisted as a Private in what became the 15<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots in 1902 shortly after leaving school, and while at University he joined the Officer Training Corps as a Second Lieutenant, gradually being promoted to command the unit. The Census of 1911 found him at Panmure Barracks in Montrose, described as "Captain, Territorial Force". When war broke out he applied for a regular commission, but he was ordered to stay in the OTC until all his cadets had been posted. Finally, in October 1914 he transferred to the 15<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, as a temporary Major, having received a special resolution of thanks from the Principal and Senate of the University.

Bruce also had an interest in politics and was a keen Conservative, a Tariff Reformer, and an advocate of National Service. Like his fellow Advocate, Alexander Brown, he was a keen platform orator – but for a different party.

While training at Sutton Veny in Wiltshire, he wrote to the Faculty asking if his sister could take out books from the library while he was on active service.

15<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots was a new army battalion raised by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh in September 1914, which landed at Le Havre in January 1916. It fought alongside the 16<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots in 101<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 34<sup>th</sup> Division. In June 1916 the battalion were in trenches at Becourt Wood, and their objective on 1<sup>st</sup> July was La Boiselle. La Boiselle was a heavily fortified former village, by this stage of the war just piles of rubble. 15<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots had the mission of attacking up two valleys, called Sausage and Mash. However, a German listening post heard a message from General Rawlinson and they were therefore ready and waiting when the dawn attack commenced. For six days, British artillery had relentlessly pounded the German trenches. Two huge mines were exploded at 0728 – the sound was heard in London, and the craters are still visible today, but the main effect was to alert the Germans, who pulled their machine guns up from deep bunkers to ground level using pulleys and slides. The 15<sup>th</sup> attacked alongside the 16<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, it is therefore possible that Napier Armit, Alexander Brown, as well as Bruce, were all fighting together that morning in exactly the same sector. The 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion fought on with horrific casualties, reaching Birch Tree Wood by the end of the day. When the battalion were finally relieved on 3<sup>rd</sup> July, and marched back to Becourt Wood, they had lost 16 officers and 610 soldiers, killed, wounded or missing. The 34<sup>th</sup> Division suffered the worst of any British Division on that fateful day. When his brother reported his death to the Faculty, he stated that Bruce was “killed entering German trenches while leading an attack.” The letter was on the letterhead of his firm, previously his father’s firm, of Bruce & Kerr WS of 16 Hill Street, known to a later generation as Bell & Scott WS.

The Scots Law Times reported his death by stating that “another name has been added to the all too rapidly lengthening roll of members of the Scottish Bar who have fallen in battle”. It is stated that although he had only been a short time in practice, he had shown great promise as a counsel.

The official history of the Royal Scots declared that “there could be no finer testimony to the resolution and devotion of the two Royal Scots battalions than the splendid unwavering advance which they made under conditions that were all against them. It was probably at the exposed zone just in front of our parapets that many of the officers and men made the supreme sacrifice.”

However, the mourning of the legal profession was as nothing to the grief suffered in the Bruce household. His father, James Bruce, died in November 1915; his brother Alexander was killed in action in April 1916; and John Bruce was killed just three months later. His surviving brother continued in the law until his death in 1949. The family graveyard can be seen in the Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh.

**VINCENT CONNELL BRUCE**  
**1888-1916**



**LIEUTENANT, 5<sup>th</sup> GORDON HIGHLANDERS**

On 26<sup>th</sup> March 1916 a huge mine exploded under the British lines at Neuville St Vaast, a small village near Arras. This sector of the line was known as “the labyrinth” due to the vast amount of tunnelling which had been carried out by both sides in this location. Bruce was declared “missing” when the mine exploded; at least 78 men were eventually recorded as having been killed by this explosion. His brother wrote in 1919 that he was “declared missing since mine explosion at Neuville St Vaast, France, March 1916 and believed to have been killed at that time.” A number of men “missing” after the explosion subsequently turned up in Prisoner of War camps, and no doubt Bruce’s family hoped against hope that one day he would be reported alive.

He was born in Edinburgh in April 1888 at 13 Alva Street. His father was a medical doctor; his mother hailed from Newmachar, Aberdeen. He attended George Watson’s College in Edinburgh between 1897 and 1906, graduated with a First Class BA in history from New College, Oxford University, before taking his LLB at Edinburgh, graduating in 1913. While at Edinburgh University, he joined the Officers’ Training Corps.

He was admitted to the Faculty in March 1914, and had hardly started his career when war intervened. In the early days of the war, he joined the 15<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, a favoured Faculty battalion, as a Private, but was soon commissioned as Second Lieutenant and attached to the 13<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots. However, he was eventually transferred to the 5<sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders, a territorial unit based in Banff and Donside, and went out with them to France in May 1915. He fought with the 153<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 51<sup>st</sup> Highland Division. They had taken over the labyrinth trenches earlier in March 1916.

Bruce designed himself as “of Inverquhomery and Longside” and owned the small estate of that name near Peterhead, so his transfer to the Gordon Highlanders seems appropriate and was no doubt done at his request. His sister had married a Captain Gray, a Peterhead Solicitor, who was also in the 5<sup>th</sup> Gordons.

Bruce was a member of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

According to the Aberdeen Journal, on attaining his majority he succeeded to the family estates, which was the cause of much rejoicing on the part of the tenantry. His musical and literary gifts were mentioned, as well as the fact that he was such a good speaker that he had hoped to enter upon a parliamentary career.

He is commemorated on at least seven memorials, namely on the Arras Memorial, the George Watson’s College memorial, the New College Oxford memorial, the St Columba’s

United Reform Church, Oxford memorial, the Bruntsfield Links memorial, the Longside memorial, and the Faculty memorial. No doubt his parents were invited to the unveiling of each of these. Strangely, no photograph of him seems to exist.

He is also commemorated on a handsome granite memorial in Longside Church, Aberdeenshire, near the family estates. An inscription on the memorial reads – “Many gave much, but he had most to give.”

**JAMES CLARK**  
**1859-1915**



**LIEUTENANT-COLONEL, 9<sup>th</sup> ARGYLL AND SUTHERLAND HIGHLANDERS**

At the age of 56, James Clark would have been perfectly entitled to take up a desk job on the outbreak of war, but instead he was killed in action while leading his battalion in action, in a “grim and victorious charge”.

Clark was born in Paisley in 1859, a scion of the famous Clark thread dynasty. He came from the same family as Alan Clark, MP and diarist. He was educated at Paisley Grammar School and the Pau Lycee in south west France. The family home was the substantial Chapel House, Paisley Abbey where he continued to stay when he studied for his MA at Glasgow University; there he was awarded prizes in Logic, Maths, English Literature and Humanity, and clearly a glittering career beckoned.

Like many of his fellow Advocates, Clark was strongly involved in the military from an early age. At the age of 17 he joined the 5<sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders as a Private; later he joined the Royal Scots (his battalion was in due course numbered 9<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots) and between 1900 and 1912 he was promoted from Captain to Lieutenant-Colonel, and by the time he “retired” he commanded the battalion. His retirement was brief, as he was brought off the reserve list in September 1914.

Clark was admitted to Faculty in 1883, and built a solid practice. He took silk in 1908. The Scots Law Times stated rather cryptically that “the position which he attained in his profession was not perhaps that which he saw before him in the heyday of his hopes” Perhaps he had his eyes on an appointment on the Bench. He was appointed Companion of the Bath, and was a member of the Royal Company of Archers.

However, the main part of his life work lay outside the law. He was a deputy lieutenant of the City of Edinburgh, and Chairman of the Edinburgh School Board. One of the schools he

helped to see established was King's Park School, Holyrood. When the School Board heard of his death they held a special meeting and resolved to change the name of the new school to James Clark School; and it continued with this name until it closed in 1972. The building is now converted into flats.

At the time he was brought off the reserve list, Clark was leading a comfortable life at 10 Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh, now the offices of the Open University. His wife Norah, also a Clark from Paisley, was in charge of a household of four resident servants.

The 9<sup>th</sup> Argylls were raised in Dunbartonshire, not far from Clark's Paisley homeland. Like most of the Scottish territorial regiments, they were on their summer camp when war was declared, in Kintyre. They subsequently trained in Bedford before landing in France on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1915, where they fought with the 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade in the 27<sup>th</sup> Division. A poignant photograph shows the Officers posing amid the ruins of Ypres in April 1915.

Their experience in Flanders was particularly bloody. On the 10<sup>th</sup> May 1915, they were occupying trenches in Zouave Wood, near Hooge, close to the bitterly contested Ypres/Menin road. After a day's successful, but costly, fighting, they saw a detachment of what looked like Cameron Highlanders advancing towards them. They held their fire until, too late, they realised the troops were in fact Germans wearing kilts of fallen Camerons. In the resulting confusion, Clark personally led his men in a charge and lost his life. According to "Deeds That Thrill the Empire" he was "their gallant and much loved Commander".

The Scotsman of 17<sup>th</sup> May 1915 carried a long article about the fatal charge, headlined "How Colonel James Clark Fell". A letter quoted at length from one of his men stated " Oh, if the Dunbartonshire folks could only have seen their county regiment in this charge they would have been prouder of them than ever. The charge took place at two o'clock in the afternoon in broad daylight. Up the boys went in skirmishing order while all the time the shells were bursting through them. It was indeed a gallant charge. Many a brave lad fell, but that did not daunt the boys from Dunbartonshire. The Huns did not wait to face them, but took to their heels when they saw the "kilties" coming on with the bayonet. Our dear old Commanding Officer, Lt.Col. James Clark, was killed in this fight. He died at his post leading us on. He was encouraging the men on when he was hit by a shell. He was greatly beloved by them all, and they all mourned his loss."

The Scots Law Times was fulsome in its praise, noting a fitting, if untimely, end to a life of unfaltering devotion to duty. The mention of his strong, manly nature, his scorn of delights and laborious manner, his stern and strong beliefs, paint a rather austere picture. However there was no doubt he was held in great respect, admiration and affection by his colleagues at Parliament House.

His grave is at Brandhoek Cemetery, close to a casualty clearing station, and some distance from the trenches at Hooge. It can be assumed that he was badly wounded, and taken to the CCS, where he died.

As well as the Faculty war memorial, his most visible memorial is the James Clark School, still remembered with affection in Edinburgh. He is also remembered on the Paisley Grammar School memorial.

**JAMES SMITH CLARK**  
**1880-1918**



**SECOND LIEUTENANT, 5<sup>th</sup> CAMERON HIGHLANDERS**

While compiling information prior to commissioning the war memorial, the Faculty sent out questionnaires for completion by the next of kin of the fallen. For reasons unknown, the family of Mr Smith Clark did not respond.

He was born into a legal family at 33 Northumberland Street, Edinburgh in 1880. His father, also James Smith Clark, was a Solicitor in the Supreme Courts, and by 1917 Auditor of the Court of Session. The son was educated at the Royal High School, Edinburgh and then graduated in arts and law at Edinburgh University. Following the award of his LLB in 1902, he was admitted to the Faculty.

He enjoyed a good career at the bar, being described in the Scots Law Times as one of its ablest and most popular members. He was an able and forcible pleader, and by the outbreak of war was well known as a busy Junior. He did not join up immediately when war was declared, but was appointed Crown Counsel as *ultimus haeres* in July 1915. He was engaged in politics for the Liberal party, and rendered service to his party at many a hard fought election.

He was a keen sportsman, enjoying golf, tennis and bridge; he also greatly enjoyed drama.

He had been appointed Honorary Sheriff Substitute for Ayrshire, and later Lanarkshire, and as a judge was known for his thoroughness and conscientiousness. An idea of his character can be gained by the story of him visiting Duke Street Prison to see for himself the different grades of imprisonment, so that when sending criminals to their fate he knew what they could expect.

In the autumn of 1915 he obtained a commission as a Second Lieutenant and joined the 6<sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders. By June 1916 he was in France but was injured after a few weeks and sent home to recover. 6<sup>th</sup> Gordons were involved in the action at High Wood during the Somme offensive, and this is probably when he was injured.

He returned to France in October 1916, and enjoyed the dubious pleasure of a winter in the trenches, by this time attached to 5<sup>th</sup> Camerons. On 3<sup>rd</sup> May he took part in an open advance against the Germans, the severity of the fire was such that only one officer from his Company survived. The Scots Law Times states that he was shot by a sniper. This seems unlikely as he was involved in an "open advance" but reports during the war frequently used the expressions "killed instantaneously" or "shot by a sniper" to give the impression death was instant and painless.

He was described as a man of the most warm hearted and generous character, highly popular among his fellow Advocates. He apparently had a reputation for relating humorous stories, and was always a welcome guest at social gatherings.

His name is inscribed on the Arras Memorial.

**JAMES FERGUSON (Senior)**  
**1857-1917**



**LIEUTENANT- COLONEL, 9<sup>th</sup> ROYAL SCOTS**

Ferguson and his son, also James, are the only father and son commemorated on the Faculty war memorial.

Ferguson Senior did not die on active service, and therefore is not mentioned in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's records, although he is mentioned in the Edinburgh University Roll of the Fallen. He is the oldest Advocate on the war memorial.

Born at Craigmount, Edinburgh in 1857, his father was William Ferguson of Kinmundy, Aberdeenshire, a director of the Great North of Scotland Railway Company. The Fergusons had bought Kinmundy in 1723; the Ferguson papers were removed from the house and deposited in the Aberdeen University archives as late as 1982. One of his forebears had served as a Major General at the Battle of Blenheim.

Educated in Birkenhead, Liverpool, and at the conveniently located Craigmount School, Edinburgh, his further education was at Edinburgh University, from which he graduated in arts and law in 1875/1876, and was admitted to Faculty in 1879. He took silk in 1902 and with James Clark was the only King's Counsel on the memorial. He was appointed Sheriff of Argyll, then Inverness, and finally Forfarshire; he was assistant Advocate Depute in 1892 and Advocate Depute from 1896 to 1898.

In 1885 he married Georgina Agnew; they had two sons, one of whom died while a pupil at the Edinburgh Academy, the other features next in this publication.

Ferguson took a special interest in railway law, and published an edition of *Deas on Railways* that was a standard text in his time. Politically, he was a staunch Conservative, and in 1882 was appointed honorary secretary of the National Union of Conservative Associations. He also wrote well known treatises on the Law of Roads, and the Law of Water in Scotland. He also had an interest in historical matters, perhaps inspired by his own

interesting forebears, and edited a collection of papers regarding the Scots Brigade in the Netherlands.

Like many of the men on the memorial, he was keen on territorial soldiering and in 1900, having served in his local volunteer battalion of the Gordon Highlanders ("The Buchan Rifles"), he helped to raise the 9<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots – at that time known as the Highlander's Battalion, The Queens Rifle Volunteer Brigade, Royal Scots. In time it became known as "The Dandy Ninth". He was their first Commanding Officer during the Boer War up to 1904; during the First World War as Colonel in command of the reserve battalion of 9<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, he helped to swell the ranks of the reserves, and was responsible for sending to France some 2,000 officers and men. However his foreign service consisted of one week at the front in 1916; although under fire, he did not take part in any action.

The Scotsman reported that he possessed a "somewhat stiff and frigid exterior" and that he had "some of the foibles supposed to be characteristic of the Aberdeenshire Laird" – whatever that might mean. However, behind the veil of his unprepossessing manner there lay concealed an abundance of talent and common sense, as well as "a singularly kind heart."

Ferguson died at his home, 10 Wemyss Place, Edinburgh, in April 1917 of "malignant neoplasm of the lung." As his younger son had died while a schoolboy at the Edinburgh Academy, and his only surviving son (James Ferguson, Junior) had been killed in action in July of the previous year, this marked the last in a direct line of Fergusons of Kinmundy that stretched back to the 1650's.

**JAMES FERGUSON (Junior)**  
**1886-1916**



**MAJOR, 9<sup>th</sup> ROYAL SCOTS**

Despite being the son of James Ferguson KC, no information was returned to the Faculty regarding Ferguson's death, no entry can be found in the Scots Law Times, and no trace can be found of him in the 1911 Census.

What we know is that he was educated at Edinburgh Academy and Charterhouse, took his arts and law degrees at Edinburgh University between 1904 and 1913; and entered Faculty in July 1913.

He was the son of James Ferguson of Kinmundy KC, and heir to the estate of Kinmundy. He was born at 41 Manor Place, Edinburgh in February 1886.

With his father such a vigorous advocate for recruitment, it was perhaps inevitable that Ferguson would join the regiment his father helped to found, the 9<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots. In 1904 he was a Second Lieutenant; by September 1915 he had been promoted Major. Based at 89 East Claremont Street, the battalion landed at Le Havre in February 1915, and at the time of his death was fighting with the 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade in the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division.

Ferguson was mentioned in Despatches in January 1916, and in July 1916 his battalion were in trenches ready to attack High Wood as part of the Somme offensive. Ferguson was killed the day before the major offensive on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1916.

9th Royal Scots had endured a lengthy tour of duty at Arras up to the beginning of July, and were then moved to Mametz Wood on the Somme. By the 21<sup>st</sup> of July they had taken over the front line in the vicinity of Bazentin-le-Grand wood, within sight of High Wood. The intended onslaught was due to be carried out by B Company, commanded by Major

Ferguson. However, terrific machine gun fire met the Royal Scots as soon as they were free of their trenches, and all the officers were hit; only a handful of men returned from the fatal enterprise.

He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial on the Somme, on the Charterhouse School Memorial, as well as the Faculty Memorial.

**IVOR FORSYTH GRANT  
1888-1915**



**LIEUTENANT, 2<sup>nd</sup> LOVAT SCOUTS**

Ivor Forsyth Grant of Ecclesgreig, Kincardineshire, was the son of an Advocate and destined for a great future at the bar before being cut down in his youth. Born in Edinburgh, his early education was at the Edinburgh Academy, where he excelled in athletics. Following his arts and law degrees at Edinburgh University, he joined the Faculty in 1913 after receiving his legal training in the offices of J and F Anderson WS, now Anderson Strathern LLP.

While studying for his law degree, he stayed with his parents at 43 Northumberland Street, along with three live in servants.

Ecclesgreig, near Stonehaven, was however the real home of the Forsyth Grant family, where generations of the family had been based. The house, still standing but in poor condition, was built in 1844.

Early in his career, he had been involved in an important criminal case heard before a full Bench. This was the case of His Majesty's Advocate against Ryan, a curious case regarding incest and an interpretation of Leviticus, Chapter 18. The case is reported in Scots Law Times, and The Lord Justice General described his argument as "ingenious". The ordeal was "a severe one for a young counsel in his first year".

Like many of his fellow Advocates, and most of the names on the war memorial, Forsyth Grant enjoyed part time soldiering before the war; in 1907 he was commissioned into the Midlothian Royal Garrison Artillery Volunteers, but in 1908 joined the Lovat Scouts, a territorial yeoman regiment recruited largely from Inverness-shire. In January 1914 he was promoted Lieutenant.

As a serving territorial, he would have been mobilised in August 1914, when the Lovat Scouts were in camp at Blairgowrie. After training in Huntingdon, and Alford in Norfolk,

finally on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1915 they embarked at Devonport for Gallipoli. They arrived at Suvla Bay on 26<sup>th</sup> September.

His father wrote in 1919:- "He only served in Gallipoli at Suvla Bay for three weeks or so after landing. He was mentioned in despatches of 10<sup>th</sup> April 1916. He died at Suvla Bay on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1915. His Colonel wrote: – "You will have heard that he volunteered for a dangerous duty and how gallantly he behaved. He went out after dark with two of his men to reconnoitre in front of the trenches; the enemy, seeing or hearing them, opened fire and he was badly wounded both in arm and leg, the men took back word to the trenches, and a squad went out and brought him in; he was then at once taken to the hospital and after his wounds had been dressed he became unconscious and died in a few hours".

Forsyth Grant was the only Lovat Scout who died that day, and only two Scouts lie in the Lala Baba Cemetery.

The Scots Law Times mentions further details of his death, namely that he went out one night with two men to reconnoitre, and to see if a house was occupied by the Turks. After he had said the words "The house is empty" he was shot in the arm, and then while on the ground he was also shot in the leg.

A slightly fuller account appears in the Scotsman of 17<sup>th</sup> November 1915, quoting from a letter:- "The ground in front of the enemy's saphead had to be reconnoitred, and last night Ivor and two men crawled out to do this from their saphead, and in particular to see if the "old house" was occupied by snipers or not. This wasn't the first time he had been doing this sort of work, and he was well up to all the tricks. They crawled out, and got up to the house and into it, and found no-one there. The walls were half broken down. He said to the men – the house is empty – and apparently the enemy must have heard or seen them at that moment. Ivor got hit in the arm then, though the men didn't know it at the time. He lay flat, and ordered the men to bolt, which they did for a little distance, and when the heavy fire ceased they crawled back and found him wounded in the left arm and left leg. Once brought in, he was very cheery and K.M. saw him smoking a cigarette as he was being carried down the sap. He was taken on a stretcher down to the hospital, and got there about 10.30 or 11 pm. He died at 3.30 this morning. He died quite peacefully, and typically of him, apologising to the doctors for all the trouble he was giving them."

The Scots Law Times describes him as a man of the most purposeful and attractive personality; he carried out charitable work for the University Settlement, was a Scout-master, and mentions he was popular and an influence for good. They described his early death as a sad tragedy, but added that nothing would ever efface from the recollections of those who knew him his infectious joie de vivre, and the courtesy and kindness with which he met young and old, rich and poor.

Forsyth Grant was mentioned in Despatches in March 1916, some months after his death.

The surviving members of the Lovat Scouts left Gallipoli in December 1915 and returned to Egypt.

He now lies in the sun drenched Lala Baba Cemetery, Gallipoli, a very small cemetery near Suvla Bay. His name is also inscribed on the St Cyrus war memorial, as well as the Faculty war memorial.

**JAMES COOK GRAY**  
**1890-1917**



**CAPTAIN, 11<sup>th</sup> BORDER REGIMENT**

Gray was awarded the Military Cross for bravery while fighting at Nieuport between 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> July 1917; one of the few Advocates awarded this medal.

He was born at Bank Street, Airdrie, in 1890; his father was a solicitor in the town, who rose to be Sheriff Clerk Depute of Lanarkshire, Airdrie and Glasgow.

He took his arts and law degrees at Glasgow University; in 1911 he was listed as being at home with his parents. He was their only child.

He was admitted to Faculty on 11th March 1916, but the very next day joined an Officer Cadet Battalion. He was commissioned in August that year, and joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Highland Light Infantry. This was a regular battalion which had been in France since 14<sup>th</sup> August 1914. He proceeded to France shortly thereafter, but returned to these shores after three weeks suffering from a sprained ankle.

He transferred to the 11<sup>th</sup> Border Regiment; and joined them in France in early 1917. He was promoted to Captain in July 1917 for saving his battalion during a surprise attack.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Border Regiment was a New Army battalion formed in Penrith in the early days of the war by the Earl of Lonsdale. It fought with the 97<sup>th</sup> Brigade and 32<sup>nd</sup> Division, and landed at Boulogne in November 1915.

According to the notes prepared for the Faculty war memorial he had seen some of the most desperate fighting of the war. Gray was clearly a brave man, since as well as his Military Cross he was mentioned in Despatches no less than three times. He was offered a staff job behind the lines when his Colonel was promoted to Brigadier, but declined as "he did not wish to leave his comrades for a safe post." He acted as Adjutant to this battalion for about two months.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1917, he had gone out to see to the comfort and activity of an outpost, and on returning was shot through the lung by a sniper, and died almost immediately.

The notes to the Faculty were signed by a Solicitor in Coatbridge, perhaps a Partner of his solicitor father.

Perhaps understandably, given that he signed up the day after he was admitted, there is no obituary in the Scots Law Times.

He is buried in Hospital Farm Cemetery, near Ypres. As its name suggests, the Cemetery was adjacent to a farm used as a casualty clearing station.

**JAMES CAMPBELL HENDERSON-HAMILTON**  
**1884-1915**



**LIEUTENANT, 9<sup>th</sup> BLACK WATCH**

More Advocates were killed at Loos than at any other engagement in the war; Henderson-Hamilton was in the thick of this terrible battle, the Great War's equivalent of Flodden.

A son of the Manse, he was born in Edinburgh, but his father was Episcopal Minister of St Mary's, Hamilton, and his childhood and early life were spent at Dalserf, Lanarkshire. His family had been landowners in Dalserf since at least 1292. Henderson-Hamilton's diary of 1904 is still in possession of his grandson and describes in great detail the busy life of an Edwardian youth.

He was educated at Trinity College, Glenalmond, where he excelled at cricket and shooting, and was cadet Sergeant in the Cadet Corps, his studies thereafter were at Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities; he graduated LLB in 1906. He served his bar apprenticeship with Strathern & Blair WS, now Anderson Strathern LLP. He was admitted to the Faculty in 1907.

The 1911 Census lists Henderson-Hamilton living in a boarding house at 18 South Castle Street, Edinburgh, which he shared with a retired maltster and a linotype keyboard operator. At that time, his great friend was the Scottish colourist, Francis Cadell, and Henderson-Hamilton often sat for his portrait.

Known at Parliament House as Jim Hamilton, he was a popular lawyer, known for his vivacity and gentleness. Despite his "nimble wit" and "ready speech" he decided to switch careers – the Scots Law Times thinks he would have succeeded but for a lack of acquaintances and backing in the profession. He therefore sought to qualify as a Chartered Accountant, and by 1914 he was in the offices of Moncrieff & Horsburgh preparing to take his final exams.

A pre-war territorial, he had been a Lieutenant in the 7<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, a battalion with its base in Leith. In September 1914 he was called to the colours in the 9<sup>th</sup> Black Watch, formally known as the Royal Highlanders; the battalion was based in Perth. He landed in France with his battalion in July 1915, a month when large quantities of Scottish territorial troops landed on the continent for the first time.

Just a month before landing in France, he was granted leave to marry Helen Rose Margaret Remington in London after a whirlwind romance. They married on 19<sup>th</sup> June; in less than three weeks he would be dead. Her only consolation was that she was carrying his child.

While in France, he received tragic news from Dalsersf; his elder brother Charles had been killed on 21<sup>st</sup> August with the Cameronians in Gallipoli. His sister-in-law had died of pneumonia a few days before.

Henderson-Hamilton's regiment fought with the 44th Brigade in the 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division and on the morning of 25<sup>th</sup> September 1915, after gas canisters had been opened – not with any great success – they advanced towards Loos village under withering fire. This was the first time his battalion had been involved in any fighting. The 15<sup>th</sup> Division had great success initially, taking Loos village before the Germans had properly erected barriers in the streets, and then advancing to Hill 70 which was taken after a fierce fight.

However, on the day Henderson-Hamilton was listed as killed, 27<sup>th</sup> September, the initial gains of the 25<sup>th</sup> would have seemed like a distant memory. Hill 70, captured at such great cost, was now back in enemy hands. After surviving the first two days of the battle, Hamilton was "killed just in front of the German trenches, while leading his men in the attack." On that same day, a fellow Black Watch officer lost his life – Fergus Bowes-Lyon, brother of the future Queen Elizabeth, and on another part of the battlefield, John Kipling of the Irish Guards.

It does seem more likely, reading these accounts, that Hamilton was actually killed on the 25<sup>th</sup>; by 0900 on that date the various Highland battalions, all mixed up, and largely bereft of officers who had mainly all been killed or wounded by this stage, had overrun Hill 70 and advanced as far as houses at the "Dynamitiere"; in the words of the official history of the 15<sup>th</sup> Division, the few survivors "remained exposed to heavy gunfire, machine gun, and artillery fire until all were either killed or wounded. Very few came back to tell the story."

The Scots Law Times recalls he was a well-known shot on the moors, and a keen tennis player. His "boyish light heartedness" and "charming youthfulness" were remembered fondly.

Henderson-Hamilton's grave can be found in Dud Corner Cemetery, Loos. He rests with 33 fellow Black Watch soldiers including his commanding officer, killed on the same day as he was. Of the 2,000 burials in his cemetery, half are unidentified; and within the cemetery is the Loos Memorial to the 20,000 or so who have no known grave.

Henderson-Hamilton's parents were devastated by the death of both of their children, and by their daughter-in-law, all within a few short weeks. His mother died in 1917, and family lore blames a broken heart, although the Hamilton Advertiser refers to an acute attack of pneumonia "which carried her off in three days." His father lived long enough to dedicate stained glass windows in St Mary's, Hamilton, before dying in 1921. The windows are supposed to depict Rachel and her sons, but clearly depict Mrs Henderson-Hamilton and her two sons – there is an almost photographic likeness.

The only positive note in this family tragedy is that Henderson-Hamilton's son, James Leslie Campbell, was born on 23 March 1916. The son was brought up in South Kensington by his mother and English grandmother, with a small allowance from the Dalsarf estate, and a noble name, reminding the infant of his Scottish roots.

**ARCHIBALD WILSON JONES**  
**1868-1917**



**LIEUTENANT-COLONEL, 4<sup>th</sup> HIGHLAND LIGHT INFANTRY**

Jones was the only Advocate who died in the war to also have been a member of the Society of Writers to His Majesty's Signet; but he does not appear on the latter's war memorial, no doubt as he had resigned his commission. However, he does have an entry in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's records, despite, arguably, not actually dying on active service.

He was born in Meerut, India; his father was a serving officer (Captain Alexander Jones of the 4<sup>th</sup> Hussars) and it seems he lived most of his life in different parts of the British Empire. His connection to Edinburgh is light; although his father was for many years resident in Edinburgh, working with the Discharged Soldiers' Society, he was educated at Marlborough, returning to Edinburgh University for his law degree. He does not however appear on the University Roll of Honour – another strange omission.

Choosing the law as a profession, he served an apprenticeship with Davidson & Syme WS (now Cameron McKenna) where he had family connections. In 1891 he became a Writer to the Signet; but he resigned his commission in 1893, and was admitted to Faculty in 1894.

In common with many of the men on these pages, he enjoyed part time soldiering in the volunteers, and obtained a commission in the Highland Light Infantry in 1893; the regiment was based in Glasgow, to which City he had no obvious connection. On the outbreak of the Boer War, he held the rank of Captain and relished the opportunity to put his military training into practice. He sailed to the colony on the Cunard ship "Aurania" with General Wauchope, commander of the Highland Brigade. The HLI saw action in Orange River Colony, Wittebergen, Witpoort and Cape Colony. As well as a mention in Despatches, he was

awarded both the Queen's and the King's South African medals. It was the first time in history the officers of the HLI advanced into action with rifles and not broadswords; and with khaki trousers rather than tartan trews.

After the peace treaty of Vereeniging, he stayed on in South Africa performing various tasks of a quasi-military nature, and on the return of a civilian administration he moved north to Nigeria where he served as a magistrate. However, the inclement climate eventually defeated him, and he was invalided home. He "retired" to his family home in Chester. From this base he continued to serve with the HLI, rising to command the regiment. He also held an appointment at the War Office regarding the supply of horses to the army; as a keen huntsman this must have been a most congenial task for Jones.

On the outbreak of war he had hoped to lead his battalion in action, but it was given the task of training up troops for other front line battalions. Despite his disappointment at not being in the thick of things, he carried out his vital role with great vigour; according to the Scots Law Times he enjoyed "one burst of sunshine" to relieve a "dull two and a half years", namely a trip to France on a commanding officer's instructional tour, including a visit to the front line.

His battalion were stationed at Amisfield Camp, Haddington for the early part of the war, and had just moved to Hawick when Jones died suddenly of what his death certificate stated was "probably cerebral apoplexy".

His body was taken to Chester, and he was buried at Pontblyddyn Churchyard, near the family home.

Jones was a committed bachelor, and according to the Scots Law Times was a "striking personality". He was endowed with a strong, well-knit, soldierly figure, and his zest for life was made clear. He held strong views, and was "ever ready to express them." He was a sayer of quaint sayings, his "shrewd observations striking his hearers all the more tellingly from the cloud of elaborate and often disjointed phraseology from which they would suddenly flash forth".

It is clear from reading reports of his life that Jones was first and foremost a soldier, and a reluctant lawyer; but his place on the war memorial, despite the nature of his death, seems well deserved.

**JAMES OGILVIE KEMP  
1865-1917**



### **CAPTAIN, 19<sup>th</sup> ROYAL SCOTS**

Kemp hailed from Keith in Aberdeenshire, where his father was a grocer and spirit merchant, later a lime manufacturer. After school in Keith and Aberdeen New Grammar School, he took his arts degree at Aberdeen University, before coming south to Edinburgh for his law degree. He studied law at Edinburgh between 1888 and 1890, and then again between 1894 and 1895, despite having been admitted to Faculty in 1889.

Kemp married Aberdeen born Janet Cuthbert in 1890, and settled down to establishing a successful career and family life. For a few years, he was interim Sheriff Substitute at Banff. By 1911 he was living at 14 Braid Hills Road, Edinburgh with his wife and five children; the eldest Alexander (19) was a law apprentice, Charles was a law clerk, and the youngest, Jean, was just four. Within a few years four of the household would be serving in the forces.

Politics was a keen interest for Kemp, and he helped to organise the St Stephen's ward for the Conservative Party. He represented that ward on the Parish Council.

Like most of the Advocates mentioned in these pages, he was a keen territorial soldier. He joined the Queen's Rifle Volunteer Brigade in 1898, the regiment which became 5<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, and had among its officers Messrs Lawson and Pringle. By 1911, due to ill health, he had retired with the rank of Captain, but he immediately returned to the colours in October 1914.

It would seem that Kemp's health was not strong, and he initially served with the reserve battalion (5/2 Royal Scots ) who were busy training troops for the front line battalions variously in Peebles, Cambusbarron and Essex. However in August 1916 he was passed "A1" and proceeded overseas. A cynic would suggest his sudden fitness coincided with a lack of officers following the Somme battle of July 1916.

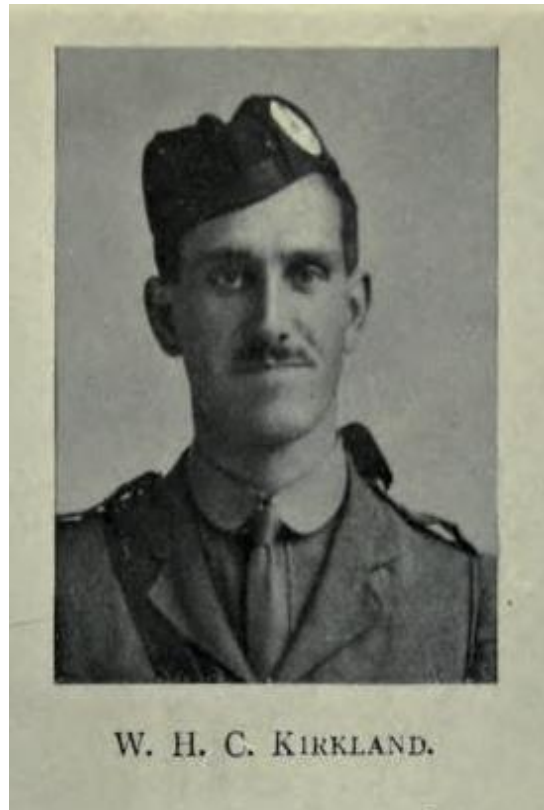
He was attached to the 19<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, who were based at Abancourt in August 1916. The 19<sup>th</sup> were a labour battalion, whose task was to carry out all the heavy labouring work involved in keeping lines of communication open. For a time Kemp was the temporary Commanding Officer of his battalion with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. In 1917 the labour battalions were re-organised, and he was given command of 1<sup>st</sup> Labour Company in 1917, shortly before his death.

Ill health resulted in him being sent home in October 1917, and he was recovering at Blencathra Sanatorium in Cumberland when he died there in December. He had been expected to make a good recovery, but "heart failure supervened". He was buried in the churchyard at Crosthwaite, Keswick.

The information for the Advocates' war memorial was given by his son Edwin in 1919. Two of the three Kemp sons survived the war. His son Charles was killed in May 1915 at Gallipoli, serving with 5<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, his father's old regiment.

The Scots Law Times praises his clear judgement and his quality of taking pains, as well as his courageous and independent manner of presenting a case.

**WILLIAM HARRISON KIRKLAND**  
**1884-1915**



### **CAPTAIN, 7<sup>th</sup> QUEENS OWN CAMERON HIGHLANDERS**

Five Advocates were killed at the Battle of Loos; the blackest day for the Faculty by a long measure.

William Harrison Campbell Kirkland – his full name, shortened to William Harrison Kirkland on the war memorial – was born in Springburn, Glasgow in 1884; his father was listed at the time as a “Hammerman” or metal worker, but in later life his father’s profession was given as “Merchant, Dundee”. His parents married in Dundee, although his mother had been born in Aberdeen.

He was educated at Ayr Academy, where he won prizes for mathematics, then at Edinburgh University, where he won the Dickson Traveling Scholarship. While at Edinburgh he gained a blue for tennis, and was a keen athlete.

In 1908, he was admitted to the Faculty. He seemed to have a considerable share of work, and was known as a busy junior. In 1911 he was living with his widowed mother and siblings at 57 Northumberland Street, Edinburgh; his brother was a commercial traveller for a brewery, and the family had two live-in servants.

A keen interest in Scottish national customs and traditions led him to found the Scottish Society, and at the time of his death he was their President.

Kirkland’s military career commenced with membership of the OTC at Edinburgh University in September 1914; by the end of the month he was commissioned and quickly promoted to Captain. He joined the 7<sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders, and was given command of “C” Company. After the war, his brother pointed out that his military career only lasted from 28<sup>th</sup> September 1914 to 25<sup>th</sup> September 1915.

7<sup>th</sup> Camerons was a New Army battalion, formed in Inverness. It trained at Aldershot, Liphook and Cirencester among other locations, before finally landing at Boulogne on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1915. The battalion had sailed from Folkestone, the fiefdom of fellow Advocate Robert Burns-Begg. Like many other Scottish New Army and Territorial battalions, it was to be blooded at Loos. The battalion was to fight in the 44<sup>th</sup> Brigade and 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division. Jim Henderson-Hamilton was in the same Brigade, and on the morning of 25<sup>th</sup> September was a few yards to the north; Arthur Pringle was a few hundred yards further north.

The Camerons' Commanding Officer, Colonel Sandilands, refused to give his troops a tot of rum – "If my men are going to meet their maker, they will meet Him sober!" he is alleged to have said, pouring the rum into the trench. Shortly afterwards, gas was released from the trenches but as there was no wind this merely served to hinder the British troops as they advanced with bayonets fixed for the first time.

The fate of the 7<sup>th</sup> Camerons at Loos is well known, but here is the account of Captain Kirkland's experience narrated by his brother –

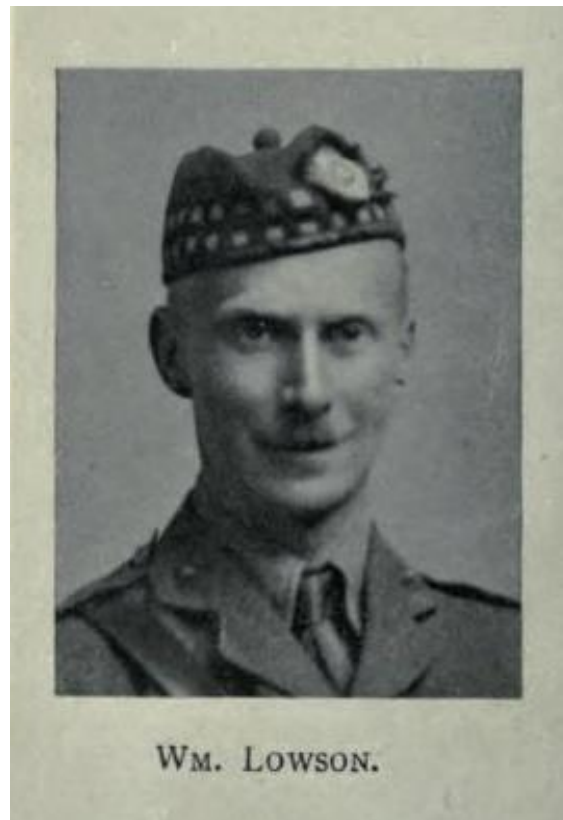
"Captain Kirkland was in command of the men who made the furthest advance of any British in the war, in France, in those days, and few returned to relate what happened. He came through the fight unscathed from 0630 to about 1420 when he was about a mile and a half from Lens – the enemy's side of Hill 70, between the two enclaves of Lens, St Auguste and St Laurent – holding the position, and heavily engaged for four hours, and waiting for reinforcements which never came. He was on the right near St Laurent, with perhaps 200 Camerons, the remnant of his regiment who took part in the fight that day, and some Black Watch, Seaforth, KOSB and Gordons. Here they came under withering fire from Loos in the south, Lens in the east, St Auguste in the north, and some neighbouring houses in the west. A Cameron who was until the Armistice a prisoner of war in Germany relates that when he saw the Germans rushing the extreme right of the position gave the order to fix bayonets and that he died fighting to the last."

The official histories back up this account. The 44<sup>th</sup> Brigade had veered seriously off course, and a huge mass of men had congregated on Hill 70 and then rushed towards Lens who should have been spread over a wide front. Colonel Sandilands tried to rally his battalion back to Hill 70 by waving a Cameron flag, but to little avail. Perhaps fortified with rum they might have followed him more willingly. From the hill he could see his troops – including Kirkland - running straight into concealed wire in front of Cite St Laurent. The Germans lay in wait for them and then opened fire to devastating effect, as there was no cover whatsoever.

Robert Burns, who died aged 104 in 2000, was in the same battalion as Kirkland and in his autobiography makes mention of him; however there is no reference to the manner of his death.

Kirkland's body was never recovered, and his name is inscribed on the Loos Memorial.

1884-1916



**SECOND LIEUTENANT, 8<sup>th</sup> ROYAL SCOTS**

It has been seen that many Advocates in these pages enjoyed the cut and thrust of politics; but only Lawson is known to have been a keen advocate of Women's suffrage. He is described in the Scots Law Times as a free thinker, and a strenuous and fearless opponent of sham and humbug.

Lawson's father was a Belfast shipbuilder, but Lawson was educated at George Watson's College in Edinburgh, followed by Edinburgh University where he graduated in arts in 1905 and in law in 1908. He won the Hurst and Vans Dunlop Scholarships, and was admitted to Faculty in 1908. The 1911 Census found him as a visitor in a house in Dunfermline, staying with his contemporary David Marshall, Solicitor. A Firm in Dunfermline still bears his name.

The Scots Law Times mentions that by the time of his death Lawson had begun to establish a practice which "bade fair to be worthy of his high talent and forensic ability." He apparently introduced a refreshing directness into his pleading which delighted bench and bar alike.

He helped to publish a short lived review called the "Blue Blanket"; he had an interest in antiquities; and the picture painted is of a young man on the cusp of great things.

Lawson seemed to have no interest in soldiering during peacetime, but in November 1914 he enlisted in 5<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots as a private soldier. One of his Officers was fellow Advocate James Kemp, and perhaps he persuaded him to try for a Commission; in any event he was gazetted in the 8<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots in April 1915.

8<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots were a territorial battalion, based in Haddington. Lawson became a musketry instructor and draft officer before joining the battalion in France on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1916, where his battalion was engaged in pioneer work during the Somme battle. The battalion were staying in bivouacs near Mametz Wood at this time, busy digging trenches and laying wire. After a break in Armentieres, greatly enjoyed, the battalion returned to the Somme front lines in October. They were back in bivouacs, this time in Mailly Maillet Wood, and did good work on various trench systems and dug outs, in anticipation of the attack on Beaumont Hamel on 13<sup>th</sup> November. Lawson was wounded by a burst of machine gun fire as he helped to consolidate captured German trenches; he was taken back to No 3 Casualty Clearing Station at Puchevillers. He did not recover from his wounds, and died on 17<sup>th</sup> November.

The Royal Scots official history mentions that under constant shell fire they not only continued to improve the captured trenches, but also constructed a light railway up to Beaumont Hamel, which proved of inestimable value in taking up stores and rations to the forward troops.

Next to the Casualty Clearing Station is the Cemetery of Puchevillers, where 1756 casualties of the Somme Offensive lie at rest, including Lawson.

The Scots Law Times described him as one of the most gifted members of the Faculty; a man of eager and enthusiastic disposition, with a mind keenly interested in the social and intellectual developments of his time. When he joined up, he surprised many of his friends who thought with his sensitive nature, fighting in the war must be a thing too horrible to contemplate; and yet despite his lack of military training, he was one of the first to volunteer.

Lawson's brothers served with the RAMC and RFC respectively, and both survived the war.

**DAVID LYELL**  
**1888-1915**



**SECOND LIEUTENANT, 7<sup>th</sup> ROYAL SCOTS**

David Lyell had the good fortune to be in the train behind the Gretna train crash; but perished at Gallipoli just a few days after disembarking.

Lyell was born at 7 East Castle Road, Edinburgh in 1888; his father was also called David Lyell and was a Writer to the Signet by profession; his Grandfather was also a solicitor. He was educated at Merchiston Castle School, where he was eventually Dux. He then proceeded to Balliol College, Oxford on a scholarship, and while studying for his BA passed through the School of Jurisprudence with honours. While studying at Edinburgh for his LLB he worked in the offices of Hope, Todd and Kirk WS ( now Gillespie Macandrew LLP).

In 1911 he was staying with his parents at Abbey House, North Berwick; he was described as a student. The family had three live-in servants.

A leading light in the Speculative Society, he became their secretary and helped them celebrate their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1914. He was rewarded by being elected their President at the end of the year.

Admitted to the Faculty on 17 July 1914, he received a Commission in 7<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots on 8<sup>th</sup> August, just four days after war was declared. He had no previous military experience, except OTC at Merchiston Castle School. 7<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots was a territorial battalion, based in Dalmeny Street, Leith, and recruited mainly from Leith. They left for Gallipoli on 22 May 1915, but half the battalion was killed in the Quintinshill railway disaster. While all the men who survived the crash were declared unfit for overseas service, the occupants of the second train embarked at Liverpool on 25<sup>th</sup> May. They arrived at Gallipoli on 14<sup>th</sup> June.

Serving in the 156<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Division, he took part in the Battle of Gully Ravine on 28<sup>th</sup> June, when his battalion suffered severe casualties; for instance all the officers in his

Company were killed that day, except for Lyell. Despite being a mere Second Lieutenant, when he reached the objective he found that he was the senior officer of his battalion present. He repelled two counter attacks by the Turks, until relieved at midnight. He marched what was left of his unlucky battalion back to rest camp. The battalions of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Division, all inexperienced troops, had insufficient artillery support and were decimated by Ottoman machine gun fire.

On 12<sup>th</sup> July, he was in command of a reserve company, and took the opportunity to write to his mother who now lived at Redfern, Colinton Road. He never finished the letter which was found in his pocket after his death. Ordered up to the front line to help the KOSB, he gained the objective but while consolidating a captured Turkish trench was hit and killed instantly.

The task of clearing a switch trench was entrusted to a company of 7<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, under the leadership of Lt. Lyell. Having threaded their way with difficulty along the broken communication trenches, littered with the bodies of the fallen, Lyell and his men rushed headlong along the switch and managed to clear the entire trench. While the men were deepening it and shoring up the parapet, Lyell, "exposing himself too freely" was killed by a sniper's bullet, although other reports mention shrapnel.

A letter penned by Lyell was published in The Scotsman, in which he stated with a certain lack of foresight:– "Achi Baba isn't taken yet, and we shall need more and more men to go through the same thing until it is. Meanwhile, I am very fit and well, and I think after Monday's events you may rest assured that I am not fated to cheat the hangman by getting shot here."

General Egerton complained vociferously about the treatment of his division, but was temporarily relieved of his command for his troubles. One third of his Division were casualties by the end of the battle.

David Lyell's father also served through the war, being mentioned in Despatches twice despite being aged 57 at the commencement of hostilities.

The Scots Law Times was fulsome in its praise, stating that no losses would be more deeply regretted than his untimely death. He was a man of great energy, endowed with cheerfulness and humour, and brave "almost to a fault."

His name is inscribed on the Helles Memorial, Gallipoli as well as the Merchiston Castle School memorial.

1886-1915



**LIEUTENANT, 9<sup>th</sup> ROYAL SCOTS**

Lieutenant Lyon was the first Advocate to be killed in action in the war, beating James Clark to that unwanted distinction by a mere two days. The Scotsman declared that Lyon was the first Advocate to be killed on the field of battle since Flodden; nobody has since rebutted that declaration, but it seems an unlikely claim.

Lyon also had the distinction of being a War Poet of some talent. His best known poem "I tracked a dead man down a trench" was published posthumously in 1916 in his book "Easter at Ypres 1915":-

I tracked a dead man down a trench,  
I knew not he was dead.  
They told me he had gone that way,  
And there his foot-marks led.  
The trench was long and close and curved,  
It seemed without an end;  
And as I threaded each new bay  
I thought to see my friend.

At last I saw his back. He crouched  
As still as still could be,  
And when I called his name aloud  
He did not answer me.

The floor-way of the trench was wet

Where he was crouching dead;  
The water of the pool was brown,  
And round him it was red.

I stole up softly where he stayed  
With head hung down all slack,  
And on his shoulders laid my hands  
And drew him gently back.

And then, as I had guessed, I saw  
His head, and how the crown -  
I saw then why he crouched so still,  
And why his head hung down.

He was born at Springfield, North Berwick in 1886. His father was an Architect, who practised mainly in England but who had offices in India Street, Edinburgh as well as a base in Dumfries – one of his surviving designs is for Findynate House, Aberfeldy. However, Lyon's father died when he was eight and his mother's address by 1911 was Tantallon Lodge, North Berwick.

He was educated at Haileybury College along with his four brothers. He then went up to Balliol College, Oxford, to study Classics, followed by Edinburgh University for his law degree; he graduated LLB in 1912, and was admitted to the Faculty in December of that year.

He was a sub-warden of the Edinburgh University Settlement, the Charity run by the University to this day.

His military career commenced at Haileybury where he was a cadet in the OTC from 1902 to 1905; he continued in the Oxford University OTC; and he joined 9<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots ("The Dandy Ninth" or the "Highlanders") in 1910, and by 1913 was promoted Lieutenant. In August 1914 he was mobilised, and his battalion, based in East Claremont Street, Edinburgh, landed in France at Le Havre on 26 February 1915. He had obtained a job as Staff Captain in the Lothian Brigade, Edinburgh, but did not want to stay at home when his friends were at the front, and managed to transfer back to his battalion, even though he lost his position as Captain. In France, he would have fought shoulder to shoulder with James Ferguson, Junior, whose father (James Ferguson, Senior) had helped found the battalion in 1900. In the early part of the war the battalion fought with the 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade in the 27<sup>th</sup> Division.

His poem "Easter at Ypres; 1915" was written in a dug out called "Mon Privilege" in Glencorse Wood near Ypres between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> April 1915; "Lines written in a Fire Trench" was written the next day again near Glencorse Wood; and other poems were written near Ypres on 16<sup>th</sup> April, and in trenches by Glencorse Wood on 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> April. Glencorse Wood was named by Royal Scots troops, as their Regimental Headquarters was at Glencorse Barracks, Penicuik.

On 8<sup>th</sup> May 1915 9<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots were in dugouts in Potijze Wood near the Menin Road, just behind the front line, some distance from Glencorse Wood. Fierce shelling was uprooting what was left of the trees, and shrapnel was shattering the tree tops, causing deadly shards of wood to fly into the troops on the ground. Lyon was killed instantaneously while tending a wounded man during what is now called the Battle of Frezenberg Ridge, part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Ypres. The British line fell back as much as two miles, but much of this ground was recovered later by Canadian troops.

Lyon was mentioned in Despatches on 23<sup>rd</sup> April by Major Ewing, later to write the official history of the Royal Scots. The citation states: - "C Company had come to a halt behind a hedge which was so thickly girt with barbed wire that men could not break through without great labour. Noticing this, Lieutenant Lyon very coolly stood up and, taking out his wire cutters, began to make gaps. Machine guns played with him, but without any sign of haste he proceeded with his task, never stopping until he had rendered the hedge penetrable."

The official history of the Royal Scots describes the events of the day he died as follows-

"On 8<sup>th</sup> May the storm broke out anew. Our trenches north of the Menin Road were subjected to a terrific and fiendishly accurate bombardment, which smashed in the parapets and obliterated entire sections of the defenders. South of the Menin Road, the shelling also caused several casualties. Lt. Lyon, who had distinguished himself by his cool daring on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, was among the victims."

The widowed Mrs Lyon lost three of her six sons in the war. Before the war, one of her sons had died at birth, and one died at Haileybury. Her son Alexander was a regular soldier, and was killed on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1914 – one of the very first casualties of the war. Another son, Charles was killed in November 1914. The only survivor of the six was the Reverend William Towers Lyon, who was the Rector of St Fillan's Episcopal Church, Kilmacolm. Even he died young, in 1922, aged only 37. Mrs Lyon, having survived her husband and her sons, died at North Berwick in November 1933. After the war, she had been granted the Freedom of the Royal Burgh of North Berwick for her war work. She also commissioned a painting by Patrick Adam called "Poppy Fields, Flanders" that is now in the ownership of East Lothian Council.

Walter Lyon is remembered on the Menin Gate, Ypres, along with one of his brothers. He is also remembered on the North Berwick war memorial with two of his brothers.

He is also remembered on a memorial in Christ Church, Lanark, gifted by his mother and his surviving brother, who was the Rector of that church. Church records seem to hint at some sort of breakdown by the Rector in 1917, understandable given the decimation of his family.

**ARTHUR STANLEY PRINGLE  
1877-1915**



### **CAPTAIN, 10<sup>th</sup> CAMERONIANS**

As already stated in these pages, no less than five Advocates lost their lives in the Battle of Loos in September 1915. Pringle was killed on the first day of the battle, like Kirkland and Buchanan Smith.

He was born at 1 Melville Street, Edinburgh, into a distinguished legal family; his father was Robert Pringle WS of Pringle and Clay WS, a firm which survived until 1985, but which is now subsumed into Gillespie Macandrew LLP. His grandfathers were Robert Pringle of Symington WS, and Robert William Jamieson WS, so it was perhaps not surprising that after Edinburgh Academy, and his BA at Trinity College, Cambridge University, he read law at Edinburgh.

He had a distinguished school career at the Academy, playing Rugby football in the XV and winning the Mile in 1894 and 1895. While at school he acquired the nickname "Touzie" which he kept in his later life. He maintained his football at Cambridge, playing in the 'Varsity match in 1897 and 1898. He was a member of the Rugby Union Selection Committee from 1903 to 1905.

He was admitted to the Faculty in 1902, after learning the practicalities of the law in the offices of MacPherson & Mackay SSC.

He married Ida Fischer in 1910 and left three young children, but it might have given him some pleasure if he had lived to see that five of his grandsons also attended Edinburgh Academy.

Interested in politics, as he had a "keen feeling towards our colonial Empire" he became a keen platform speaker for the Unionist Party. He contested North-West Lanarkshire for the Liberal-Unionists, but without success.

He had a solid practice at Parliament House, and wrote a book on the National Insurance Act of 1911.

In the census of 1911 we find Pringle living at 8 Duke Street, Edinburgh, with his Alloa born wife and his two month old daughter. Also staying in the house were Ida's sister and husband, and two Danish servants, one being the cook, and the other the nurse.

Most Advocates who were killed in action had previous military careers, and Pringle was no exception. He was a keen member of the Academy OTC, and the Edinburgh University contingent. In 1902 he joined the Submarine Miners, who were volunteers responsible for Port security, not only by laying mines but also manning searchlights. They were disbanded and made into territorial units of the Royal Engineers in the Haldane reforms, but Pringle did not join the new unit; instead he became the Commanding Officer of the University OTC. In September 1914 he obtained a commission in the 10<sup>th</sup> Cameronians, also known as the Scottish Rifles. Based in Hamilton, they were a New Army battalion, and served in the 46<sup>th</sup> Brigade in the 15<sup>th</sup> Division. After training in England, they landed at Boulogne on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1915. With many other Scottish battalions, both New Army and Territorial, they made their way to Loos to be blooded in battle.

On 25<sup>th</sup> September at 0630, after an unsuccessful discharge of gas, men of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cameronians advanced on the village of Loos and rapidly took it from the Germans, although Pringle was wounded after progressing no more than 200 yards. He was then wounded twice more. As early as 0915 they had reached the Lens road; and by 0930 were in command of Hill 70. The Scottish troops, now with very few officers left, instead of consolidating their position, carried on beyond Hill 70 and were mown down by relentless machine gun fire on the uncut wire protecting the German rear trenches. Pringle's Major had been killed, so although badly wounded, he led what were left of his men to the reverse side of Hill 70. He was left in a shell hole there and never seen again. By 1300 the Germans had recaptured Hill 70. His death was confirmed "by German sources" so his body must have been found by the Germans, but his burial place was later lost.

A letter to his widow stated – "He seems from all reports to have led B Company during the attack in a most glorious manner. Though wounded several times, he continued to go up and over Hill 70, then, I believe, when we had to retire over the crest of Hill 70, he was again wounded; when last seen he was being carried back into Loos. He and others like him are responsible for the glorious name the Regiment made for itself on the 25<sup>th</sup> and the 26<sup>th</sup>."

Pringle is commemorated on the Loos Memorial, the Edinburgh Academy war memorial, and the Trinity College, Cambridge memorial.

The Scotsman reported – "All honour to him and his like, a kind, big-hearted, gallant man, made of stuff that men are made of."

**JOHN SMALL  
1887-1916**



### **LIEUTENANT, 9<sup>th</sup> BLACK WATCH**

John Small was born in Port Maria, Jamaica in 1887, where his father had flourished using his skill as a chemist to increase production of coconuts on the family's plantations, and thereby amassed considerable wealth. The Small family originally hailed from Dirnanaen, Blairgowrie, which had been granted to them in 1588, and had provided many colourful characters in Scottish history.

The Scots Law Times felt Small had inherited his father's patience and method.

Small returned to Broughty Ferry in 1888, but due to illness had no regular schooling until the age of nine, when he enrolled at Dundee High School. His house in Broughty Ferry was called "Wentworth" after his house in Jamaica. He took his arts degree at St Andrews University, then graduated LLB at Edinburgh University. His legal training took place in the offices of Warden & Grant SSC and Wright Johnstone & MacKenzie in Glasgow.

The 1911 Census found him at lodgings in Hillhead Street, Govan; three of the lodgers were solicitors, and one of them was Small's 27 year old sister.

In July 1913 he was admitted to the Faculty, but he had only a short time to apply his "natural abilities, careful training, and exceptional power of judgement" (Scots Law Times) before war was declared. Despite having no military background, he enlisted in the 15<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, as a private soldier, on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1914. He apparently greatly enjoyed being a "Tommy" and helping to guard Edinburgh Castle, but before long he was gazetted as a Second Lieutenant in the 11<sup>th</sup> Black Watch, although later transferred to the 9<sup>th</sup> Black Watch. Based in Perth, 9<sup>th</sup> Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) was a New Army battalion and after training in the south of England landed at Boulogne on 8<sup>th</sup> July 1915. Small did not however join his battalion in France until 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1915, just a few months after his fellow advocate, Jim Henderson-Hamilton, serving with the same battalion, was killed at Loos. When he reported for duty near Vermelles his battalion were fighting with 44<sup>th</sup> Brigade in the 15<sup>th</sup> Division.

He fought mainly in the Loos and Lens sector; ironically the land he was fighting for was steeped in the blood of Scottish soldiers of the 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Divisions who had perished in September 1915, including five Advocates. He acted as billeting officer, legal adviser at Courts Martial, as well as dealing with all the hardship and routine of trench life.

On 29<sup>th</sup> April 1916, 9<sup>th</sup> Black Watch were in trenches near Hulluch when the Germans launched a massive gas attack. Like the British experience with gas at Loos in 1915, it probably killed as many Germans as Britons; however it did manage to kill Small, whose sister wrote succinctly to the Faculty when asked for details of his death - "In front of Loos by gas."

According to the Divisional history, "The Black Watch suffered a good many casualties from a change of wind which blew the gas back over their area after the men had removed their masks". A neighbouring battalion contained an NCO who had been a mariner in civilian life; he saw large numbers of rats jumping into the trenches from no man's land and ordered his men to don their gas masks; this particular battalion suffered no gas casualties at all.

The Scots Law Times praised him as a thoroughly "all round" man – keen on fishing, riding, chess, motoring, and a good violin player. He had humour and fancy and simplicity. He had a number of letters published in the Spectator entitled "Letters to Children from the Trenches". These were addressed to "Muffle" and signed by "Uncle John". His last letter was dated "In the trenches, 28<sup>th</sup> April 1916" and makes reference to gas attacks. He was killed the next day. He was according to the Scots Law Times a straightforward, modest and sympathetic fellow.

He is buried in Vermelles British Cemetery, near Lens.

**ALEXANDER TAYLOR  
1872—1917**



**CAPTAIN, 9<sup>th</sup> ROYAL SCOTS**

Many of the men on these pages were killed in action after only a few weeks or even days at the front, but Taylor endured lengthy service and saw action in some of the worst battles of the Great War.

Born in Barnmills, Carrickfergus, Ireland, in 1872, his parents moved the family to Glasgow when he was young, and he was educated at Glasgow Academy and Glasgow University. His father was a manufacturer, although of what is not known. He graduated with honours in Classics, before taking his law degree, and carried out his training at Messrs Robertson, Low, Robertson and Cross. He was admitted to the Faculty in 1896.

According to the Scots Law Times he never acquired a large practice despite appearing in several important cases. He contributed many articles to the law journals of the time, and reported on Justiciary cases. He acted as interim Sheriff-Substitute in Banff, Stornoway, Aberdeen and Glasgow; and in 1911 he was appointed Sheriff-Substitute at Forfar where he proved most efficient, and his judgements were always apparently cogent and well-reasoned, and only rarely appealed.

He married Rhoda McIntyre at Bridgend House, Callander in March 1905; her father was a fancy dress manufacturer from Glasgow and Taylor's address at that time was given as 1 Albyn Place, Edinburgh.

In 1900 9th Battalion (Highlanders) The Royal Scots was formed to meet a widely held desire that the capital of Scotland should have a Highland unit, just as London and Liverpool boasted kilted regiments in the London and Liverpool Scottish. It was raised as a battalion of the Queen's Rifle Volunteer Brigade, but with distinctions of its own, notably the kilt, which has earned for it the nickname of "The Dandy Ninth." It sent forty-five men to South Africa. Taylor was commissioned in this battalion on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1900, along with fellow Advocate James Ferguson, Senior. He resigned in 1902, but rejoined in 1905; in 1912 he was moved to the reserve list after being made Sheriff in Forfar. On 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914 he was mobilised as a reservist, and as a Captain took command of "A" Company. 9<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots were based at 89 East Claremont Street, Edinburgh.

He landed with his battalion at Le Havre on 26<sup>th</sup> February 1915, and fought initially with 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade of the 27<sup>th</sup> Division, later with the 154<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division. He fought at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Ypres (with Walter Lyon) and was severely wounded at St Julien, one of the actions during the battle, on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1915. After almost a year's recuperation, he returned to his battalion on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1916, and survived the Somme offensive, when his battalion suffered huge losses. He was killed at the Battle of Arras on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1917 when leading his Company in the fighting for the Scarpe Valley.

The Scots Law Times mentioned his kindly nature, and genial humour, which made him a great favourite.

The Royal Scots' official history states that the battalion took over trenches near Fampoux on the 15<sup>th</sup> April. On the 21<sup>st</sup>, "A" Company succeeded in forcing a passage along a trench in front of Mount Pleasant Wood, and after ejecting the Germans, established a post there. This should have been enough, but the Company then went on to Roeux Wood, where it was sadly cut up by the enemy riflemen and machine gunners, and was forced back to its starting point. In this unlucky action, Captain Taylor was killed.

Taylor was buried at Level Crossing Cemetery, Fampoux. Beside him lie another 51 officers and men of 9<sup>th</sup> Royal Scots, almost all of whom were killed in the same week as Taylor.

**GEORGE MUIR THORNTON  
1882-1917**



**CAPTAIN, 8<sup>th</sup> SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS**

Thornton was described by the Scots Law Times as “extremely reticent”, “the most retiring of men” and “not well known in Parliament House” but despite this trait of character he was quick to volunteer for the armed forces, and disappointed when initially rejected.

He was born in Canaan Lane, Edinburgh in February 1882. His father was an India Rubber Manufacturer. Thornton & Co initially specialised in waterproof coats, such as the Ventilating Celtic Waterproof Coat, but gradually shifted its manufacturing to sports equipment, especially golf clubs. It still sold clubs from its Edinburgh premises at 78 Princes Street into the 1960’s. His father moved from Canaan Lane to Grange Park, Edinburgh by the 1890’s.

Thornton was educated at Merchiston Castle School, and graduated from Trinity College, Oxford in History; he then studied Law at Edinburgh University, graduating in 1907 with distinction. He initially wished to become a solicitor, and was admitted as a Writer to the Signet in December 1907. He worked in the offices of Menzies, Bruce-Low and Thomson WS. However he resigned his commission as a WS in 1909, and was admitted to the Faculty in March 1910.

8<sup>th</sup> Seaforth Highlanders were a New Army battalion formed at Fort George on the Cromarty Firth in September 1914. Thornton’s father owned property at Feddal, Perthshire, Black Watch territory, so it seems unlikely he would have chosen this battalion – more likely they had a shortage of officers in November 1914 when Thornton joined. Initially he had been gazetted to 10<sup>th</sup> Seaforths, a reserve battalion which never served abroad.

Serving in the 44<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 15<sup>th</sup> Division, Thornton would have seen action at Loos (where he fought between Arthur Pringle and Jim Henderson-Hamilton), Hulluch in 1916 (where John Small was killed in action), Pozieres and Flers-Courcelette on the Somme, the

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battles of the Scarpe, and finally Pilckem Ridge and Langemarck in 1917, part of 3<sup>rd</sup> Ypres, otherwise known as the Battle of Passchendaele. Thornton had been promoted to Captain in January 1916.

On the date of his death, 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1917, Thornton's battalion was decimated – no less than 132 officers and men lost their lives, the vast majority of whom, like Thornton, are remembered on the Tyne Cot Memorial, their bodies never recovered from the Flanders mud. His brother, writing from 78 Princes Street in 1919, stated that he died at Iberian Farm, which was a farm about three and a half miles north east of Ypres, about half way between Ypres and Passchendaele.

According to the Divisional history, a company of Seaforths mistook the Steenbeke stream for the Zonnebeke Brook, and lost direction. No confirmation of this is possible, as there were no survivors. Another Company was reported to have advanced to Iberian Farm (about half way between Ypres and Passchendaele) but suffered heavy losses "under exceptionally heavy machine gun fire". Today, modern farms occupy the sites of the farms named by the troops as Iberian, Gallipoli, or Keir, where so many Seaforths met their end.

He never attained a very busy practice at the Bar, according to the Scots Law Times it was more than doubtful if he would have wanted it. However he had appeared in the House of Lords in an important feudal casualty case. He was a keen fisherman, and had fished in the wilds of Ireland and South Harris. Despite his "reticence" he was, according to the SLT, a straight fellow, a true friend, and a genuine sportsman.

His name is commemorated on the memorials of Merchiston Castle School, Trinity College, Oxford, and the Faculty.

**DAVID ALEXANDER BEVERIDGE**  
**1886-1915**



**SECOND LIEUTENANT, ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY**

David Beveridge was not an Advocate, but an Intransigent, that is to say a potential Advocate who had petitioned for entry but had yet to be accepted into the Faculty. Nonetheless, he and his three fellow Intransigents occupy a proud place on the Faculty war memorial.

Beveridge was born in Dunfermline, where his father, Erskine Beveridge, was a well-known and wealthy linen manufacturer. Erskine Beveridge was also a photographer of some note, who had eight sons and one daughter. Collections of his photographs are held by the National Museum of Scotland. David was educated at St Ninian's, Moffat, and Loretto School. At Loretto he was a prefect and played football and hockey for the school. He then proceeded to Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he graduated BA in 1908. He then took his law degree at Edinburgh, graduating LLB in 1909.

In the 1911 Census he was staying, aged 24, at Vallay House, North Uist. This house had been built by his father on an island off North Uist which was cut off by the tides twice a day. Here his father could write and indulge his passion for nature and archaeology. However in 1911, David Beveridge was in charge of the house, along with his 19 year old brother, George, and three live-in servants. Tragically, alcoholic George was to drown when he misjudged the tide in 1944; the house was then abandoned and still lies empty to this day. The great Beveridge linen business passed into liquidation.

On 4<sup>th</sup> July 1914, Beveridge lodged his Petition for Entry with the Faculty. War would be declared exactly one month later.

At first, Beveridge joined the University OTC, but after a few months he decided to join the forces proper, and obtained a commission in the Royal Field Artillery. His unit served in the 54<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 10<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division. The Division sailed from Devonport on 7 July 1915, en route to the Dardanelles. After a period at Alexandria, he landed at Mudros, Gallipoli, on 18<sup>th</sup> July 1915. He caught dysentery after a few months on the peninsula, and was taken by hospital ship to Malta and died at St Andrew's Hospital, Malta, on 13<sup>th</sup> September. He arrived on what was later determined to be the busiest week ever for admissions to Maltese Military Hospitals – 3,000 in that one week. Despite the best attentions of the RAMC, he died and was buried in Pieta Military Cemetery.

**JAMES BRUCE**  
**1887-1917**



**CAPTAIN, ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY**

James Bruce was the third son of the Honourable Frederick John Bruce, of Seaton House, Arbroath. A grandson of the Earl of Elgin, he was born in Arbroath in 1887.

When he lodged his petition for entry to the Faculty in May 1911, he was staying at 5 Great Stuart Street, Edinburgh.

He enlisted in the Forfarshire Battery of the 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Highland Brigade RFA in August 1914. During his service he rose to the rank of Captain. He was lucky enough to escape any wounds or sickness, and his father narrates his continuous service with some pride.

After training at Bedford with the rest of the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division, he proceeded to France on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1915. His battery fought at Festubert, Laventie, Arras, Albert, Bray, Armentieres, High Wood (Somme), Schwaben Redoubt (Somme), Beaumont Hamel, Pozieres, Arras, Vimy Ridge, in other words most of the main actions on the Western Front.

In 1917, the battery saw much heavy fighting on the northern bank of the Scarpe at Greenland Hill and Roeux. They then moved to Ypres, and took part in the third Battle of Ypres, otherwise known as Passchendaele, capturing the High Command Redoubt. A few days after the battle commenced, while crossing the eastern bank of the Ypres canal on his way to an observation post, he was hit by a shell and "died instantaneously."

He is buried at Poperinghe New Military Cemetery. Poperinghe is some distance from the Ypres Canal, and was the location for a number of military hospitals at the time. It seems unlikely therefore that his death was in fact instantaneous as a body would have been buried near to where death occurred.

**GILBERT THOMAS GORDON**  
**1877-1915**



## **SECOND LIEUTENANT, 8<sup>th</sup> GORDON HIGHLANDERS**

Not much is known of the education of Gilbert Gordon, who does not appear to have been a law graduate of any of the Scottish Universities; it is more than likely that he held a Canadian degree, given his background. As an Intransigent to the Faculty, he did not warrant an obituary in the Scots Law Times either.

We do know that he was born in Newfoundland in 1877, to James Gordon, a Merchant in Newfoundland. He was a keen Freemason, a member of lodges in both Edinburgh and Colombo, Ceylon. There is no record of his connection with Ceylon.

His Petition was dated October 1909 and later that month it was recorded that he had passed the exams in Moral Philosophy and Logic, and in the History of Great Britain. By 1911 he was boarding at 22 Grosvenor Street, Edinburgh with the Boarding House Keeper, four other boarders, and two servants. He was described as "law student".

He enlisted as a Private in the Newfoundland Regiment in August 1914, presumably because he was back in Newfoundland for the summer vacation. He was rapidly promoted to Corporal, and landed in England in October 1914, and by November had transferred to the 5<sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders as an officer. At the time of his death he was serving with the 8<sup>th</sup> Gordons. On 30<sup>th</sup> April 1915 he wrote to the Dean of Faculty mentioning that he had transferred to the Gordons, adding that he was in an isolation hospital in Aldershot recovering from German measles.

8<sup>th</sup> Gordons was a New Army battalion, formed in Aberdeen in August 1914 and which landed at Boulogne on 10 May 1915 after training in Salisbury and Bordon. It served with the 26<sup>th</sup> Brigade in the 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Division, and found itself in trenches in the Loos sector preparing for the big push due in September.

The 9<sup>th</sup> Division were to the north of the 15<sup>th</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Divisions, directly in front of the heavily fortified Hohenzollern Redoubt. About a kilometre to the south, George Buchanan Smith waited for the whistle to blow with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gordons. At 0630, after unsuccessful release of gas and explosion of mines, the Gordon Highlanders attacked the Redoubt and Fosse 8 directly behind it, taking both objectives successfully but after heavy losses. The Commanding Officer, a veteran of the march from Kandahar to Kabul in 1880, was wounded.

Gordon fell while leading his men in a bayonet charge on 28<sup>th</sup> September. The Redoubt was under severe pressure from a German counter attack. Major General Thesiger, in command of 9<sup>th</sup> Division, was killed attempting to review the situation. However the bravery of the 8<sup>th</sup> Gordons, among others, allowed the Redoubt to be saved; no doubt it was in the vicinity of the Redoubt that Gordon was killed in his bayonet charge.

He was buried in Chocques Military Cemetery, which was the site of a Casualty Clearing Station in 1915. It is therefore possible that he was mortally wounded earlier in the battle and died at the CCS. However, Gordon is the only member of 8<sup>th</sup> Gordons killed on 28<sup>th</sup> September buried in this Cemetery. Most are listed as missing on the Loos Memorial. It is believed 8<sup>th</sup> Gordons lost 17 officers and about 500 other ranks.

In September 1914 Gordon wrote his Will on an envelope before embarking on his troop ship. He left all his worldly goods, worth \$18,732, to his mother.

**GEORGE BUCHANAN SMITH**

1890-1915



**SECOND LIEUTENANT, 2<sup>nd</sup> GORDON HIGHLANDERS**

Born in 1890, Buchanan Smith is, at 24, the youngest Advocate, or rather Intransigent, on the war memorial. He was born at 91 Fountainhall Road, Aberdeen, where his father was minister of Queen's Cross Free Church. Later his father, the Reverend George Adam Smith, was Professor of Theology at the Free Church College, Glasgow. On the outbreak of war his father, who was later styled the Very Reverend Professor Sir George Adam Smith, was Principal of Aberdeen University, a post he held with distinction from 1909 to 1935.

Educated at Glasgow Academy, where he played football for the first XV, he also had his first experience of military life in the OTC in 1907. Later at Glasgow University, where he graduated in Arts in 1912, and at Aberdeen University, where he graduated LLB in 1914, he was also a member of the OTC, leaving as a Cadet Sergeant.

He served his apprenticeship with C&P H Chalmers, Aberdeen, (now Ledingham Chalmers) and Tods Murray & Jamieson WS, Edinburgh (now Shepherd & Wedderburn LLP).

Buchanan was his mother's maiden name, and the family later adopted "Buchanan Smith" as their family name.

Buchanan Smith signed the Petition for entry to the Faculty on 6 July 1914, but on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1914, the day after war was declared, he was gazetted as a Second Lieutenant and attached to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Gordons. As a former member of the University OTC he was automatically allocated to the Special Reserve. His initial war service consisted of guarding the wireless station at Stoneywood, Aberdeenshire until 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1914 with other reservists and recruits; no doubt this posting allowed him to go home to see his parents at Chanonry Lodge, Old Aberdeen, on a regular basis, but was hardly the military adventure he would have been expecting.

On 4<sup>th</sup> December he accompanied a detachment of 206 men which were joining the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion in France, and for a brief period Buchanan Smith served with this battalion; as they were a battle hardened regular unit, who had suffered heavy losses at Le Cateau, he must have left deeply honoured to be fighting with them. His war record of defending the wireless station in Aberdeen would not have impressed his new fellow officers.

By August 1915 he was transferred to the 2nd battalion, another regular battalion who had started the war on Imperial duties in Cairo, before landing at Zeebrugge, via Southampton, on 7 October 1914. By the time Buchanan Smith joined them they had fought at Ypres, Neuve Chapelle, Aubers, Festubert and Givenchy, and were some of the finest troops in the British Army.

On 14<sup>th</sup> December he led two platoons in an assault on German positions at Wytschaete. He was wounded twice, through the back of the neck and on the left hand, but after lying under fire all day led the 14 survivors back to the British lines. For this coolness under fire he was mentioned in Despatches by his Commanding Officer, Colonel Crawford.

He recuperated in London, spending three months in hospital. On 21<sup>st</sup> May 1915 he was passed fit for light duties, and returned to the Depot at Castlehill Barracks, Aberdeen. He returned to France on 8<sup>th</sup> August, and again accompanied a draft of troops to the front – this time a detachment of Guards. He then joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion for a few weeks of trench digging and exercises, preparatory to the anticipated battle of Loos. By 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2<sup>nd</sup> Gordons were in position, more or less in the middle of the front line, with fellow Intransigent Gilbert Gordon to his north, and Messrs Thornton, Henderson-Hamilton, Pringle and Kirkland to his south. As has been stated elsewhere in these pages, five Advocates were to die in the impending battle.

On the eve of the battle, he volunteered to cut some of the wire in front of the German trenches, which he did successfully. The next morning, at 0630, he led his platoon – which was on the left and guiding flank of “A” Company – and advanced through the gas to the German lines. According to his grief stricken father, writing in 1919, he fell about one hundred yards beyond the British trenches, about half way between Vermelles and the junction of the Lens – Hulluch road. Like most men in the war, his father believed he had been killed “instantaneously” by a shell.

The Aberdeen University Court, meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1915, passed a motion of sympathy with the Principal in his loss.

George’s brother, Robert, was killed at Dar es Salaam with the 33<sup>rd</sup> Punjabi Regiment in June 1917.

As well as losing two sons, Principal Smith was deeply affected by the number of Aberdeen Graduates and Students who were killed in the war, in particular the University Company of 4<sup>th</sup> Gordons who were virtually wiped out at Sanctuary Wood in September 1915 – an action that was supposed to ease the pressure on the troops at Loos. His only consolation was that his son Alick Buchanan Smith, also serving with the Gordons, survived the war.

## **SECOND WORLD WAR**

### **JAMES ARCHIBALD MACDONALD**

1912-1942



### **CAPTAIN, 5<sup>th</sup> QUEEN'S OWN CAMERON HIGHLANDERS**

There is only one name on the war memorial from the Second World War, and although these pages are meant to focus on the First World War, it would be churlish not to recognise the sacrifice of James (Hamish) MacDonald.

The son of the Honourable Godfrey MacDonald and Helen Bankes, James went to Eton College, and joined the 5<sup>th</sup> Camerons following his BA at Magdalene College, Cambridge and LLB at Edinburgh University. The Cameron Highlanders was very much his family regiment, as his father had fought with this regiment in the Great War, and his brother and nephew were also Cameron Highlanders.

MacDonald was in the Territorial Army before the war, joining in November 1930. In August 1939 he was called up and was posted to the 5<sup>th</sup> battalion.

5<sup>th</sup> Camerons arrived in Egypt in August 1942, and fought at the Battle of El Alamein on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1942, their first taste of battle in North Africa. MacDonald died the day before the battle – he was the only Cameron who died that day.

His battalion sailed from the Clyde, Mersey and Severn to Egypt, and by July 1942 were in Cape Town. To be in a city free from blackout restrictions must have been quite a relief after the long sea journey, and shore leave was duly granted. By August they had disembarked at the Suez Canal, and made their way to the front line. While at Tahag Camp, near the Pyramids, the battalion was inspected by Winston Churchill. They then took up their positions on the front line.

To quote from Field Marshall Carver's book: - "There was no sign that the enemy had any inkling that the attack was imminent, but there had been two scares. There was a last minute scare on the 23<sup>rd</sup> itself, when a report reached 30<sup>th</sup> Corps that an officer and an NCO of the 5<sup>th</sup> Camerons had been missing since 9 o'clock on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. However at half past six that evening, 8<sup>th</sup> Army Intelligence told Montgomery that all the evidence pointed to the fact that the enemy were not expecting an attack that night – and they were right."

The records of the Cameron Highlanders mention that MacDonald and a Corporal Fleming went out on reconnaissance but failed to return. It appears they got lost and ran into enemy positions; MacDonald was killed and Fleming was taken prisoner. Only seven men were

killed in North Africa that day; and MacDonald was the only Cameron. His body was never recovered, and he is remembered on the Alamein Memorial.