



## Fort Fraser Despatches - April, 2021

After a brief hiatus, caused by circumstances we are sure everyone is tired of hearing about, we are pleased to provide you with a new edition of Fort Fraser Despatches. As we all return to what we hope will be a semblance of normal life this publication will attempt to appear with greater regularity.

Herewith, all the news fit to print (or at least that we are aware of):

### **Welcome to the New Command Group and Board of Directors**

**On March 27** the Fort Fraser Garrison and Society held its annual general meeting via the now familiar process of ZOOM. Some familiar and trusted individuals having put their names forward the members attending decided as follows:

Elected President and continuing thereby the role of Officer Commanding the Garrison was Major James Barrett.

Assisting Major Barret to the best of their abilities will be:

Chris Hoskin, Vice-President and second in command

John Hooker, Adjutant and Secretary

Sven Raun, Treasurer

Diane Beaton, Padre

Mark Dwor, PMC

Frank Fowlie and Mike Redmond, Directors

## Historical Display Unit (H.D.U.)



Fort Fraser HDU does not consider itself to be a “re-enactor” outfit - but a “representative group” presenting the regiment as it appeared in 1757 – 63.

The HDU uniformed unit, aka “The Guard”, is most often the image of the 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser Highlanders in the mind of the public - our trademark, if you will.

As are all “Fraser”, members of the HDU are Officers of the Regiment, that is to say “gentlepersons of good breeding “, well trained as leaders and respected as such by the enlisted ranks.

All members are encouraged to wear “the Scarlets” and Kilt of the 78<sup>th</sup>, and to learn the foot, musket and sword drill of our 18<sup>th</sup> century predecessors. This requires a certain commitment of time and money - a little or a lot of each - but the rewards are plentiful as we “parade, exhibit and disseminate” according to our constitution.

A garrison “lease to own” program is available, and the basic uniform may be acquired on a “loan” basis. Uniformed officers must own their personal items of kit such as hose, shoes and bonnet.

As a member of the Fort Fraser HDU you will be part of an important historical display which exists to inform and educate as well as to be the public face of the Fort Fraser Garrison and the international organization known as The 78<sup>th</sup> Fraser Highlanders.

Participation in the HDU is open to any member of the Fort Fraser Garrison.



Your membership in the HDU will require that you:

- *commit to the aims and requirements of the Garrison*
- *know the history of the Regiment and inform others well*
- *know the drill and regulations of the Regiment and perform them well*

- *know the uniform and weapons of the Regiment and wear them well*
- *regularly and enthusiastically attend training sessions and performances.*

## **The Battle of Drumrossie Moor**



Today 275 years ago was the Battle of Culloden. The last pitched battle to be fought on British soil 16th April 1746.

The Battle of Culloden

by Ellen Castelow

The last ever pitched battle to be fought on British soil took place on 16th April 1746 on Drumrossie Moor, overlooking Inverness.

At the Battle of Culloden, a well-supplied Hanoverian Government army led by the Duke of Cumberland, son of King George II, would face the forces of Charles Edward Stewart, The Young Pretender, in the final confrontation of the 1745 Jacobite Rising.

The Jacobite Rising was an attempt to overthrow the House of Hanover and restore the House of Stuart to the British throne. Having failed in their attempt to gain support in England and advance on London, the Jacobites had retreated all the way back to Scotland.

Jacobite Rebellions Under constant pressure from the King's army, Charles marched his force of around 6,000 men ever further northward, before finally establishing a base at Inverness.

Ignoring advice to launch a guerrilla campaign, Charles chose to stage a defensive action and confront his enemy at nearby Drumossie Moor. He also ignored warnings that the marshy rough ground may favour the larger Government forces. And so, on a rain soaked morning the Government army struck camp and headed towards the moorland around Culloden and Drumossie to take up their positions.

Over the first half-hour of the battle, Cumberland's artillery battered the Jacobite lines, first with roundshot and then grapeshot. Finally, Charles issued the orders his Highlanders had been waiting for, to charge the enemy.

Although hampered and slowed down by the boggy ground, many of the Highlanders reached the Government lines. In the bloody hand to hand fighting that followed, the new Redcoat tactic of bayoneting the exposed side of the man to the right, rather than confronting the one directly in front appears to have paid dividends. The Highlanders finally broke and fled, the entire battle had lasted less than hour.

Over the weeks that followed, those Jacobites that managed to escape the battlefield were hunted down and killed (as pictured below). Charles himself evaded capture for five long months, eventually making good his escape to France and final exile.

### Not to be missed:

Following on the successful ZOOM events for St. Andrew's Day, Burns Dinner and our Whisky Tasting, the Garrison will continue to meet virtually at the next scheduled event:

Battle of Ste. Foy (April 1760) Commemorative Dinner  
Saturday, April 24, 2021 1800 for 1830  
via ZOOM

Join Zoom Meeting ( click the link below)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88579101553?pwd=UUorcHBIWHNDcmJyNGUzYVRySk5sQT09>



### **The Battle of Sainte Foy – 28 April 1760**

*" from April battles and Murray generals, good Lord deliver me!"*

The 78th Highland Regiment (Fraser's) was tired, sick and starving after the long winter of 1759-60. On the morning of 28 April, 1760, Brig. Gen. James Murray marched his troops out of the battered Ville de Québec to face a superior number of better fed Franco-Canadian soldiers under the new commander, General François Gaston, Duc de Lévis. A two hour battle resulted in stalemate, and the British withdrew to Québec after suffering serious casualties. The Frasers, after successfully defending two important redoubts, performed rear-guard action to aid the withdrawal. The 78th Fraser Highlanders suffered greatly as 211 officers and men were killed or wounded on that April day.

If you have not yet received, or responded to your invitation, please do so to the PMC at:

[mark@northeastcorner.ca](mailto:mark@northeastcorner.ca)

**Until we can all meet in person, virtual events will continue to be our means of maintaining the bonds of comradeship.**

OUR HISTORY, A Series of articles of interest (we hope) on the history of the Fraser Highlanders and related subjects:

A contribution by Honourary Lt. Col. Mike Redmond:

**WHO WERE THE FRASERS?**



While the Frasers are often depicted as a clan regiment raised by Simon Fraser much as his father had raised Clan Fraser's forces during the 1745 rebellion, the actual history of the regiment, and the background that we know of its officers, is somewhat more complex.

The following information is taken from a summary of biographies of the officers of the Fraser Highlanders compiled by the Clan Fraser Society.

While we know quite a bit about the officers of the 78th Fraser Highlanders, we know much less about the individual soldiers, and even less about the wives and children who campaigned with them. There is more to be learned as scholars continue to unearth more information about those who served before us. That may cause some of this information to be amended.

First, how many did serve in the Regiment?

In April 1757 the regiment stood at: 41 Officers

40 Sergeants

20 Drummers

987 other ranks

130 Supernumeries – these included 60 women, generally wives of sergeants and other enlisted men. Wives of officers, if they accompanied the army, did not appear on muster rolls.

By May 1758, before the Siege of Louisbourg the regiment constituted:



82 officers  
65 sergeants  
30 drummers  
1365 other ranks  
60 women

A fourteenth company of 100 men under Alexander Fraser arrived prior to the Battle of the Plains of Abraham.

On Discharge in 1763 the Regiment was comprised of:

40 officers  
886 NCOs and men  
22 women

Of the Lt. Colonel, Majors, Captains and Captain Lieutenants, 25 served with the Regiment up to the surrender of Montreal.

Of those:           6 had prior service with the Scots-Dutch Brigade in the Netherlands

4 had prior service with the British Army

3 had served with the Jacobite Army in 1745-46

2 had prior service with the French army

1 had served with the Independent Highland Companies

9 had no previous military experience

Of those 15 were wounded, five more than once. Five were killed in action. Two died of disease. Two were invalided home for other reasons. In total 24 out of 25 officers of the rank of Captain and above were casualties of one sort or another.

Of the Lieutenants and Ensigns. 49 served in total. Fourteen of those were promoted from the ranks to ensign after 1758.

Of the Lieutenants and Ensigns: 5 had served with the Scots-Dutch Brigade  
7 had served in the British army  
4 had served with the Jacobite army  
33 had no prior military experience

Of those officers twelve died in service, 19 were wounded and one invalided home for other reasons.

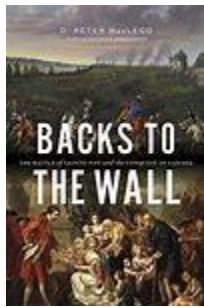
Among the officers there were:

- 25 Frasers (7 of whom were named Simon)
- 8 Campbells
- 8 MacDonalds (of various spellings)
- 6 Camerons
- 5 MacPhersons
- 3 Stewarts
- 2 McLeods
- 2 Baillies

(To Be Continued)

## BOOK REVIEW

We would encourage members to send in any brief book reviews they would like to contribute to this publication. Books should be in keeping with our regimental mandate to commemorate the history of the 78th Fraser Highlanders, our gallant adversaries and Canadian military history generally.



### Backs to the Wall by D. Peter MacLeod

The Battle of Sainte-Foy and the Conquest of Canada

Douglas & McIntyre 2016

While there are many books that have dealt with the 1759 campaign and the capture of Quebec, including MacLeod's own worthy work, *Northern Armageddon*, there are few that have dealt thoroughly with the deadly winter that followed the initial capture of Quebec, and the subsequent campaign to complete the capture of New France.

*Backs to the Wall* continues MacLeod's excellent work, particularly his use of original French and Canadian sources. It provides a fascinating look at the final

stages of the war, including the Battle of Ste. Foy, arguably the largest and bloodiest battle ever fought on Canadian soil.

Sláinte mhath!