

## HIGHLAND MILITARY DRESS.

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### A SHORT HISTORICAL REVIEW.

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(By kind permission of the Gaelic Society of Inverness, before whom this article was recently read and in the "Transactions" of which Society it is to be published.)

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The above title embraces a subject which affords almost limitless scope for research work to the military antiquarian and artist. With it may be included the collecting of old military prints and relics, in themselves a source of great fascination as well as invaluable assistance to the study of the subject. The evolution of our Highland military dress is, one, however, which has, hitherto, not been nearly sufficiently appreciated or generally understood in its many and varied aspects, hence the surprising ignorance so often displayed on the matter!

The lack of a national military museum, State-aided if possible, such as France, in the shape of "Les Invalides," and other countries possess, is a very real drawback to our national life, and serves to accentuate what I have just stated above. The real aim of the Edinburgh Castle War Memorial Scheme, about which there has been so much discussion recently, is, I believe, to provide for such a museum in Scotland, where relics of the old Scots army and of Scottish regiments, from the earliest time to the present day, may be collected and there find a permanent abode. If this be so, such a scheme is surely deserving of our utmost encouragement and assistance.

With this preamble I will now proceed to the subject in hand.

The Highland regiments of the British Army have ever been distinguished, not only for their extreme bravery in the field and good conduct in quarters, but also on account of their peculiar and striking garb. This latter has singled them out for special attention wherever they have served, and, in time, has caused the Highland dress to be known all over the world.

The reluctance of the British Government, at one time, to employ the Highlanders in regiments wearing their own garb, and officered by themselves, is a fact well known to historians, and was due to old jealousies and fears which the risings of '15 and '45 did not lessen.

Only after some difficulty was permission obtained, in the early part of the 18th century, for Independent Companies to be formed. These companies, of which we have not too many authentic details as regards dress, were sometimes clothed in their ordinary Highland garb (belted-plaid, short jacket, tartan hose, and bonnet), with a musket, bayonet, cartouche box and belts supplied by Government, while others wore the red jacket and waistcoat laced with silver for officers and white braid for the men. A painting by Delacourt, a French artist of great accuracy, done at this time, shows an officer of one of these Independent Companies. This little-known picture depicts the officer in the act of taking snuff. He is shewn in the full belted-plaid, the tartan being a dull one of peculiar pattern, or *sell*, and wears a broad flat blue bonnet with a small tuft of bearskin at the side over the black cockade (the Hanoverian badge). The sporan or purse, the details of which are not clear owing to shadow, is of the usual small size prevailing at the time. The dirk is curiously silver-mounted, while the black leather sword-belt with silver mountings, the basket-hilted broadsword, and square-cut short red jacket with slashed cuffs and long red waistcoat are clearly shewn. The hose are of the Government or military pattern (also frequently worn by civilians in full dress), i.e., red and white diced,<sup>1</sup> with buckled shoes. The hair is unpowdered and clubbed. There are figures of soldiers in the background, but these are not too distinct.

In 1740 the Independent Companies then in existence were regimented into the Black Watch (*Am Freiceadan Dubh*), and of its original uniform<sup>2</sup> we have full details both from General Stewart of Garth's description and also in the prints of the regiment drawn by Van der Gucht, circa 1743 (see "Military History of Perthshire") some of which appear in Grose's "Military Antiquities."<sup>3</sup> The early uniform of this regiment is also seen in the prints (published in London at the time) of the ringleaders of the so-called "Mutiny of the Black Watch" in 1743. It is not quite certain whether the diced red, white, and green (or red and white) border to the bonnet, said to resemble the "fesse-chequey" in the coat of arms of the house of Stuart, was introduced at this time or a few years later. At any rate it soon became the distinguishing mark of the military bonnet, and had been originally designed, so it is said, to attract recruits from clans of Jacobite proclivities!

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<sup>1</sup> Commonly known as "cath-dath" or "ca' da'" (battle colour). This does not appear to be the correct interpretation, however, for it apparently comes from a lowland word, "cadis," or "cadiz," meaning striped or chequered in any colour or colours. Up till about 1860, the hose were worn with little or no turn-down, thus exposing the scarlet garter, all round.

<sup>2</sup> The tartan worn was of a special *sell*, to which I will refer later. The pipers and musicians (bandsmen) wore a red tartan, now universally known as the Royal Stuart, but which, in old days, was often called the "music tartan" of the Black Watch.

<sup>3</sup> Edition of 1786. Vol. I., p. 183.

The Highland soldier at this time had, in addition to the arms furnished by Government (i.e., musket, bayonet, and broad sword), a "taugh" or Lochaber axe<sup>1</sup> (for Pay-serjeants, instead of the usual



**The Lochaber Axe.**

halbert), a dirk, and pair of "dags" or steel pistols, also, in some cases a "targaid" or shield supplied by themselves or by their colonel. Black Watch pistols of this time (marked H.R.) are still in existence, one pair being preserved in the Black Watch depot at Perth.

Of the second Highland regiment to be formed, Loudoun's Highlanders, 1745-1748, we have an accurate idea of its uniform from the painting by Ramsay of the Earl of Loudoun, its colonel. The details in dress are much the same as those in Delacourt's picture, the flat round bonnet being undiced and with a tuft of bearskin. The tartan of the belted-plaid is that of the Black Watch.

The illustration facing this page, reproduced from an old German print (circa 1760) shows the uniform dress of Keith's and Campbell's Highlanders,<sup>2</sup> which served with so much distinction, under Prince Ferdinand, in Germany, from 1760 to 1762.

It will be seen that the dress and the tartan are practically the same as that of the Black Watch when first regimented.

The year 1759 saw the first of a long list of Highland Fencibles embodied. These fencibles were regular troops, but raised only for the duration of the war, and they mostly saw service at home. Ramsay's portrait of the Earl of Sutherland (of which there is a rare print by McIntosh) in the uniform of the Sutherland Fencibles of 1759-1763, shows the detail of dress to be much the same as in portraits already referred to.<sup>3</sup> The sporan, or purse, however, appears to be of goatskin and has several long corded tassels, unlike the previous ones noted, which are of fur or skin with small tagged leather thongs. The bonnet is broad and undiced with the usual tuft of bearskin. The tartan is Black Watch.

<sup>1</sup> About 7 feet long. Somewhat similar to the halbert, but having a broad axe blade and a hook (like a salmon gaff) at the end of the Pole. It was a most formidable weapon. Used originally in the district of Lochaber in Invernesshire, hence its name.

<sup>2</sup> The original 87th and 88th Regiments of Foot, raised in 1759 and reduced in 1763.

<sup>3</sup> There is also a contemporary painting of John Mackay, 5th of Strathay, in the uniform of this regiment, in the possession of the writer's family, and which depicts the dress exactly as in Ramsay's picture. On the silver tip of the shoulder belt, however, appears (engraved) the Mackay crest and motto "MANU FORTI," evidently not a regimental device but one introduced by the wearer! Great latitude was allowed in those days in the matter of such details. Officers often wore their own dirks and broad swords.



An Officer.

Undress uniform.

A N.C. Officer.

From about 1775 the red jacket<sup>1</sup> was worn turned back in front showing lapels of the facing cloth, with the skirts also turned back showing the white lining or in some cases the facing cloth, and with a turn-down collar and small round cuffs of the same material (instead of slashed cuffs). The waistcoat was cut shorter and often made of white cassimere or of facing cloth. Officers and sergeants wore scarlet, the men brick-red jackets; and these colours continued until well on in the 19th century, when scarlet was adopted for all ranks. The bonnet was now more "cocked" or set-up, of a pork-pie shape, and with high diced band. The tuft of bearskin was enlarged, and black ostrich feathers were introduced curling over the bonnet. The sporan or purse was now usually of grey or white goatskin, with six or more small tassels, and with a flap-top opening to the pouch. Being more cumbersome than the old sporan (a small affair) it was soon discarded for wear when in fighting order, and to this I refer later on. Black cross-belts were still worn, but these gave place a few years later to ones of white leather, pipeclayed, for all ranks. The crimson sash for officers became less voluminous, and those for sergeants had a thin line through them of the colour of the regimental facings, which was only done away with in the middle of the 19th century. In 1792 the pike was introduced for sergeants, and lasted until 1830; it took the place of the halbert, or in most Highland corps the Lochaber axe.

In 1796 the jacket was slightly altered, the collar being heightened. The bonnet had now become a more imposing affair, more feathers being used and with the addition of a "hackle plume" over the cockade. This hackle plume (like those of the line) were usually of red and white for the battalion companies, green for the light company, and plain white for the grenadier company.<sup>2</sup> These distinctive colours were only abolished in the middle of the 19th century, when the flank companies were done away with.

Portraits and prints of this period are more numerous, and among the latter those to be seen in Kay's "Edinburgh Portraits" are of special interest. Many give us very exact details as to the uniform then worn in Highland corps. Much information may also be derived regarding the uniform distinctions of the different Highland Fencibles from the quaintly illustrated list of Fencible infantry compiled and drawn by Col. Hamilton Smith in his manuscript tabular statement of the British Army in 1800, now in the South Kensington Art Library.

Among the numerous Highland fencibles corps raised 1793—1799, several wore that style of the old Highland garb known as the

<sup>1</sup> Officers of Highland corps had two epaulettes, those of other regiments (under field rank) only one, on the right shoulder. Highland subalterns were often taken for field-officers!

<sup>2</sup> Up to the end of the 18th century, the Grenadier and Light companies of many Highland corps wore special headdresses of leather or bearskin, like those worn by other flank companies of the army, and which, with the Highland dress, must have appeared somewhat incongruous!

"*truibhas*" or truis (trews), tight fitting pantaloons of tartan cut on the bias. Among these were the Rothesay and Caithness Fencibles (1794-1799), of which Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster was Colonel. His well-known portrait by Raeburn, also a contemporary coloured print of an officer of the regiment shows this form of dress, adapted to military uniform, very clearly. The only regular regiment to wear the traditional *truis* was the 71st or Highland Light Infantry, in which it was dressed from 1807 (after discarding the kilt) until about 1810, when it assumed ordinary light infantry uniform. It fought at Vimiera (1808) in the truis. Those regiments which had truis wore the sporan or purse when in full-dress, according to ancient custom.

The total number of Highland regiments to be raised towards the end of the 18th century, comprising regular corps (several of which are still in the Army List), fencibles, militia, local militia, and volunteers, was very large. The 42nd or Black Watch, being the oldest Highland unit, these corps mostly based their uniform (especially the Highland clothing) on the style prevailing in that regiment (see "An Old Highland Fencible Corps"<sup>1</sup>) except for the Highland militia, which, only formed by Act of Parliament in 1797, wore the ordinary uniform of the line (see Kay's "Edinburgh Portraits"). While it is probable that some at least of the fencibles, local militia, and volunteers wore their own district or clan tartans,<sup>2</sup> it is evident that many (especially the fencibles) had the pattern known as the "*Government tartan*," which was, in fact, the same as that worn by the Black Watch since its embodiment.

This tartan, according to the most reliable authorities, was evolved from that *sett* known as the "Argyll Campbell," but with the white and yellow stripes omitted. The tartan manufacturers,<sup>3</sup> faced with the difficulty of clothing the many regiments embodied at this time, found a solution, in some cases, by giving the colonels the "Government" pattern, the most easily turned out, and, in other cases, when a distinctive *sett* was required, by altering the "Government" pattern by the introduction of various stripes or lines. This latter was done in the case of all the present-day regimental tartans (except that of the 79th, which was devised by Cameron of Erracht's mother, and the 93rd, and which therefore are all based on the "Government" or Black Watch *sett*). Thus the regimental tartan worn by the Highland Light Infantry (old 71st) and by the 72nd and 78th Highlanders (now Seaforth Highlanders), all of whom were raised in Ross-shire, is not in its origin a Mackenzie *sett*, but the old "Government" tartan with a white and red stripe added. So also the tartan worn by the Gordon Highlanders, which has a yellow line

<sup>1</sup> The History of the Reay or Mackay Fencible Highlanders, 1794-1802. Published by Wm. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh. 1914.

<sup>2</sup> See painting by Raeburn of The Macnab, in uniform of the Breadalbane Volunteers. The tartan is a red one.

<sup>3</sup> Tartan for the army was nearly all woven in and around Stirling, as it still is.

or stripe inserted, and which, in time, has erroneously become known as the "Clan Gordon" *sett*, although purely a regimental tartan! The 93rd Sutherland Highlanders adopted the "Government" *sett* from the first, hence to this day the Argyll and Sutherlands wear the same tartan as the Black Watch but in a lighter shade.<sup>1</sup>

The tartan worn at this time was of the old "hard" variety, something like bunting, and although somewhat rough to wear retained its colours and was much more durable and lasting than the present "soft" tartans, introduced into the army in the latter part of the last century.

The following extract from the Order Books of a Highland regiment, dated in 1795, is of interest, as showing the prices fixed for making up officers' and men's clothing at this period:—

FOR OFFICERS.		FOR N.C. OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS.	
	s. d.		s. d.
Making a regtl. new coat	... 5 0	Sergt.-Major or Drum Major—	
" " Waistcoat	... 1 6	Making a coat	... 3 0
" " Pair britches	... 1 6	" " waistcoat	... 1 6
To cocking a bonnet, &c.	... 1 0	Sergeants—	
To sewing a plaid	... 0 6	Making a coat	... 2 0
To sewing and pleating a plaid <sup>2</sup>	1 0	" " waistcoat	... 1 0
To making a Kilt and thread...	0 6	Drummers—	
		Making a coat	... 2 0
		" " waistcoat	... 1 0
		Rank and File—	
		Making a coat	... 1 6
		" " waistcoat	... 0 10
		To cocking a bonnet, &c.	... 0 6
		To making a pair of hose,	
		including thread	... 0 2
		To sewing & pleating a plaid <sup>2</sup>	0 6
		To making a Kilt and thread	0 3

By the end of the 18th century, the ancient belted-plaid, a somewhat cumbersome though useful form of garment, had been done away with, and the "feilidh beag" (fellebeag), or little kilt,<sup>3</sup> hitherto worn in undress only, became the permanent garb, with a "fly" plaid added (in imitation of the belted-plaid) when in full dress or review order. The sporan, or purse, which had only been worn when in full dress for some time past, as already noticed, and consequently never seen on service, only reappeared in the Crimean War as a part of the field dress, to be discontinued again after the South African War. At this period also (about 1801) small gaiters of blue or black cloth were introduced for wear when in marching order, the low-quartered shoes

<sup>1</sup> Being thus a Government tartan it was issued to the Lowland Scots regiments when they adopted tartan trousers in 1881. It has also become the basis of several present-day clan tartans.

<sup>2</sup> As the belted plaid had fallen into disuse after the '45, it appears to have been partly made up by the needle, to enable it to be put on the easier.

<sup>3</sup> The belted plaid took 6 yards of tartan, double-width, but the allowance for the little kilt was only 3 to 3½ yards at this time, increased to 4 yards later on. The kilt of those days was a very scanty covering compared with the voluminous garment now worn, which takes 7 to 8 yards!

beind found unsuited to the sands of Holland and Egypt.<sup>1</sup> The hose at this time, and up to the middle of the 19th century, were made of tartan (known as "Hose Tartan,"  $\frac{3}{4}$  yard being allowed per man) which was cut to the shape of the leg and sewn up behind. These cloth hose, unless well fitting, soon caused blistered feet. Knitted hose, as worn now, only came into general wear in about 1856. On the introduction of gaiters, for marching purposes, hose-tops, or footless hose (*mogans*), came into use. In full-dress, however, the long hose and buckled shoes continued to be worn until 1856, when the gaiter or spat, made of white drill since about 1836, came into wear for all occasions. In 1798 the red jacket was buttoned down to the waist, with bars of white lace across the chest for the rank-and-file, and this pattern continued in the army until about 1827, when the coatee, with small tails and slashed-cuffs, was introduced.

The uniform of the Highland soldier, during the Napoleonic period, consisted of the following:—Belted plaid (or latterly the fly-plaid), kilt (little), 2 prs. cloth hose, 1 purse and strap, 1 pr. of garters, jacket, waistcoat, bonnet (mounted), 2 prs. shoes, foraging cap or "humble" bonnet, and 1 pr. of gaiters. He was also supposed to have, and keep up, one pair of fatigue trousers,<sup>2</sup> but as uniformity was not expected these were made of any cloth.

Trousers came to be recognised at this time for wear when in fatigue dress, as I have just mentioned above, and were made of any cloth available. After the Waterloo period, they became an integral part of the man's kit, were made of a uniform colour, and worn for certain parades.<sup>3</sup> Not until the middle of the 19th century, however, were they made of tartan.

When in the East, and at the Cape, Highland corps usually wore the dress prescribed for those places, i.e., white duck trousers or pantaloons, short plain red jacket, and a "round hatt" with feather in it! Early in the 19th century, however, the kilt and bonnet came to be invariably worn when on Colonial and Indian service, the bonnet, however, being in time replaced by the sun-helmet.

During the ill-fated New Orleans campaign of 1814-15, the 93rd Sutherland Highlanders, the only Highland corps engaged, were dressed in tartan trousers and the bonnet without feathers, the kilt, for some reason, probably shortage of tartan, not being worn.

<sup>1</sup> There is a wonderful story, often told, of how the Highland regiments adopted white spats in memory of the Retreat to Corunna. Such stories are hard to kill!

<sup>2</sup> The Highland regiments, at this period, were still mainly composed of native-born Highlanders, many of whom had never worn "breeks." Lowlanders joining learnt to speak Gaelic, so commonly spoken was it in the ranks (Gardyne). Apropos of trousers, when first issued for fatigue wear, it is related that some of the men put on this unaccustomed garment "back to front," much to the amusement of the others! Some, indeed, never became partial to this form of dress, which they termed the "funnel-shaped garment of the Saxon," and wore the kilt for all duties.

<sup>3</sup> The 42nd was the first to adopt trousers, which were worn for evening parades, the men being expected to keep this extra article of wear in proper order, out of their own pockets!





**72nd Highlanders Uniform as worn, circa 1800-16.**  
*(From a coloured drawing by Captain Mackay Seobie.)*

Serjeant.  
Drill Order.

Officer.  
Marching Order.

Corporal.  
(Lt. Cy.)  
Marching Order,

Private.  
Review Order.

At this period the cost of Highland clothing was as follows:— Sergeants' tartan, 2/- a yard; privates' tartan, 1/1; hose tartan for 1 pr. hose ( $\frac{3}{4}$  of a yard), 2, 2; sergeants' bonnets (humble), 1/7 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; privates' bonnets, 1/1; coat and waistcoat,<sup>1</sup> 4, 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; shoes, 6, - per pair; gartering, 3d. a yard.

The officers of Highland corps wore the kilt, when on service, up to and including the Corunna campaign, but in Wellington's campaign in Spain and France the officers of the 42nd, 79th, and 92nd (the only kilted corps engaged) wore grey or blue pantaloons with half-boots, or shoes and gaiters,<sup>2</sup> the only "Highland" distinctions being the feathered bonnet, sash (worn over the shoulder in Highland regiments), and the broadsword.<sup>3</sup> The rank-and-file, during the wars at the end of the 18th century and up to the Waterloo period, were dressed, when in marching order, in the kilt, full-dress bonnet, hose and gaiters. During Wellington's campaigns all ranks adopted a peak to a bonnet,<sup>4</sup> which were detachable, and only worn when in field-service dress.<sup>5</sup>

Many of the prints and battle pictures executed during this eventful period of our history are not too reliable in detail, for they show the Highland soldier fighting in full dress kit (i.e., with purse, long hose, and even plaid!), and the same may be said of pictures done by modern British artists depicting battle scenes of that time, many of which are grossly inaccurate. Perhaps the most reliable of contemporary prints are those produced by Vernet and other French artists during the occupation of Paris in 1815. These shew the peaked bonnet, hose and gaiters, kilt without purse, and the officers in pantaloons and half boots, or shoes with gaiters. Taken all round the Highland uniform at this period was thoroughly traditional, sensible, as well as being a smart and serviceable kit.

With the long peace following Waterloo, the military tailor got busy, and in time many absurd and meaningless changes and innovations were made in the uniform of the army, the Highland dress not escaping! These may be seen by referring to the prints of that period, of which those by Hull, Reeves, Ackerman, Spooner, and Martens are perhaps the best known.<sup>6</sup> The feathered bonnet assumed enormous propor-

<sup>1</sup> Although the jackets had been buttoned down since 1798, waistcoats were issued up till 1822, and, with the addition of sleeves, were used for fatigues. Afterwards it became an article of semi full-dress, known as the buff, or white shell jacket.

<sup>2</sup> The reason being that they were encouraged to ride as much as possible, so as to be fresh at the end of a long day's march. This difference in dress must have made them very conspicuous when in action.

<sup>3</sup> The officers of light companies, also field-officers, wore the light cavalry sabre.

<sup>4</sup> The feathered bonnet of those days was perhaps the most serviceable and picturesque head-dress in the British Army. A sergeant of the 92nd describes in his journal how he wore his bonnet all through the Corunna campaign, and, on his return home, had it remounted for "it was as good as new" after being washed!

<sup>5</sup> During the Peninsular War, owing to the wear and tear of service and to the delay in sending out supplies of tartan from home, the Highland regiments were hard put to it, on more than one occasion, to keep to their distinctive dress. Any man going sick, his kilt was at once handed over to a fit man.

<sup>6</sup> All this "tinkering" with the Highland garb was reflected in civil Highland dress, and not to its improvement either!

tions, sporans became huge and unpractical (hiding the front of the kilt, and having only a small pocket at the back!), heavy gilt mountings were added to the dirks, and shoulder-brooches of a large size set with cairngorms (often sham ones by the way!) were introduced for fastening the plaid at the shoulder, which up to now had been secured by a simple loop to the epaulet. Sgian dubh (wrongly spent "skene dhu"), or stocking knives were introduced, much against the wishes of at least one Highland colonel (Sir John Macdonald).<sup>1</sup> The hose were gartered very low, and secured by elaborate garter-knots with long depending ends. In time, a deeper turndown to the hose hid most of the garter. (See previous note.)

In 1855, the coatee, with all its accumulation of gold lace and heavy bullion epaulettes, was abolished in favour of a plain doublet<sup>2</sup> with "Inverness skirts" or flaps, and which at first, being made very loose, was anything but smart!

Nor was this all, for, between 1840-1856, the Colonels<sup>3</sup> of several Highland regiments, who should have known better, thought fit to alter the historic red and white hose (hitherto regarded as *the* military pattern of hose) for those of other colours (perhaps to save the washing bill!), while the pipers, who formerly wore the same uniform as the rank-and-file, were now given green doublets, shoulder plaids, tartan hose, and blue glengarry bonnets (a civilian head-dress) instead of the feathered bonnet. One regiment, however, with truer military instinct, preferred to retain the feathered bonnet for its pipers, which they retained until full-dress was done away with in 1914. The old "humble" or plain bonnet (i.e., bonnet without feathers) was also at this time discarded for the more mincing glengarry, which, in some regiments, was undiced and thereby in no way differed from the civilian head-dress of that kind! The men also lost much of the appearance of extra height which the high diced band of the "humble" bonnet gave to them. None of these improvements were for the better, nor were they necessary.

After the South African War, the Highland regiments, in common with the rest of the army, were given a service dress of kharki,<sup>4</sup> apart

<sup>1</sup> Sir John refused to allow his officers to wear Sgian dubh for many years, although other regiments had adopted them. His reply was "that it was the weapon of a ghillie and not of a gentleman." (See Col. Gardyne's "Life of a Regiment" or History of the Gordon Highlanders.)

<sup>2</sup> The coatee is very smart when worn with the kilt, more so than even the pre-war doublet (a smarter affair than the pattern of 1856). It was a pity that the coatee was done away with for kilted corps. It could easily have been simplified and shorn of its superabundance of gold lace. It has now (1921) been authorised for mess dress in Highland regiments!

<sup>3</sup> The colonel of a regiment in those days had great power in regard to the clothing of his corps. One indeed, at this time, wished to clothe his men in *green*, and was only restrained by the Secretary for War!

<sup>4</sup> Kharki drill cloth had been worn for everyday use by the army in India for many years before this. The word "kharki" is an Indian one, meaning "mud coloured." The serge cloth, now adopted for the army at home, was made in a darker shade of kharki than that in vogue in India.

from the full-dress red. With this dress we are all only too familiar, for it had altered but little up to the outbreak of the late war, the only incongruity, perhaps, about it being the kharki apron covering the kilt (still worn for marching order), and which, in many regiments, is regarded as an "abomination," although possibly a necessary one from the point of view of inconspicuousness!

Spats, shoes, and diced hose were replaced by kharki hose, boots, and half-putties during the recent war, and although now worn for all orders of dress it is likely that the diced hose, if not shoes and spats, will be restored for full-dress wear in time. This change was not derogatory to our garb, whilst, no doubt, more practical for modern field-service conditions.

The introduction, or, to be more accurate, the re-introduction of the flat bonnet, kharki dyed, and officially known (though absurdly so) as the "Tam o'shanter," is a reversion to old days and sensible change from the glengarry, which latterly has been worn far too small, perched on the side of the head (like a Field-service cap), and with meaningless and absurdly long ribbons streaming behind.\* The re-introduction of the flat bonnet, however, has been quite spoilt by the fact of its being now made out of *serge cloth*, pieced together, instead of the old knitted material (*thrum*) of which it had been fashioned since earliest times. These bonnets are ill-shaped and badly finished off behind. They are, I believe, mostly turned out by Jew contractors in London, a fact not encouraging or edifying to the bonnet-makers of Scotland!†

While, at present, there is no exact indication that a full-dress will be restored to the army, owing mainly to the question of expense, it is probably only a matter of time before this will be done. But whether it will be, for Highland regiments, the old full-dress (red doublet, feather bonnet, white spats, etc.) in its entirety, or a modification more in keeping with tradition, is hard to say. One will hope *the latter*. I think, and I feel sure all those with experience and knowledge of our army will agree, that some form of full-dress uniform is *essential*, now as much as ever, not only from the recruiting point of view, but, more especially, in the interest of smartness and true esprit-de-corps, which, combined, go so far to make up *that* discipline which has ever been so distinguishing a mark of the British Army.

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\* These long ribbons originate from the short ones which fastened the V-shaped slit at the back of the bonnet, and which, in old days, were tied in a neat bow at the back with short depending ends. The present bonnet, ungainly though it may be, could be tied in this fashion (although it has no proper slit behind), which many regiments do not do, and thereby increase its smartness somewhat.

† It is certainly high time that an agitation be made, in the proper quarter, for *all* army bonnets to be manufactured, as heretofore, in Scotland. Also that they be made of the proper material, which, in the interests of economy, is more lasting than any other. The loss of the greater part of the army bonnet trade (for glengarries are no longer officially recognised), formerly, as it should be, in the hands of Scottish bonnet makers, is a fact to be deplored, and is moreover a blow to the bonnet-making industry in general. The stock of the present-pattern bonnets is so great that they were issued to the Auxiliary police cadets in Ireland!