



The Black Watch: A Concise History

Trevor Royle

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The Black Watch was formed at Aberfeldy in Perthshire in the early eighteenth century as an independent security force, or 'watch', to guard the approaches to the lawless areas of the Scottish Highlands.

Instantly recognisable due to the famous red hackle cap badge and the traditional dark blue and green government tartan kilt from which it got its name, The Black Watch was renowned as one of the great fighting regiments of the British Army and served with distinction in all major conflicts from the War of Austrian Succession onwards. In a highly controversial move, the regiment served under the operational control of the US Army during the counter-insurgency war in Iraq in December 2004.

The Black Watch prided itself on being a 'family regiment', with sons following fathers into its ranks, and this new concise history reflects the strong sense of identity which was created over the centuries. In 2006, as part of a radical review of the country's defence policy, The Black Watch was amalgamated into the new Royal Regiment of Scotland. This new account of the famous regiment is therefore a timely memorial to its long and distinguished history.

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