World War One through Scottish eyes. Scots and identity in the British army during the First World War.

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Introduction

Scotland's national identity has a strong physical component and is closely linked to warfare and the military. Scottish military heroes as William Wallace (1272-1305) and King Robert the Bruce (r. 1306-1329), who fought the English during the Wars of the Scottish Independence in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century, remain household names many centuries after their death. Tales of the latter's victory over King Edward II of England at Bannockburn (1314) or the decisive defeat of the Jacobite Pretender Charles Stuart at Culloden (1746) are anything but forgotten in Scotland today.[1]

The 'soldier of fortune' was Scotland's main export product long before whiskey or jute. Already by the thirteenth century Scottish soldiers were well-known abroad for their martial qualities and many served the European kings as mercenaries.[2] After the union of Scotland and England in 1707 many Scots also served Great Britain. During the Jacobite Rebellions (1715 and 1745) many Highlanders picked the losing side, supporting the deposed and exiled House of Stuart in its attempt to reclaim the British throne. Treated as pariahs for most of the eighteenth century, in the nineteenth century the British came to look upon Highlanders more favorably because of their important role in empire-building. Distinctively Scottish with their kilts and bagpipes, the Highland regiments became synonymous with the Scottish contribution to the defense of empire, and their actions in the Crimean War (1853-1856), Indian Mutiny (1857), Second Afghan War (1878-1880) and Second Boer War (1899-1902) were widely covered in the press. Indeed, their share of the attention was so large that it sometimes arose the jalousies of both the Lowland and non-Scottish regiments, who felt their own successes were dwarfed by the Highland regiments.[3]

This thesis explores the Scottish war experience in the Great War (1914-1918). Volunteering and dying in far greater numbers than the UK average, Scottish troops played an important role in the First World War as well, with eventually 22 out of 157 battalions sent abroad being Scottish.[4] In this thesis I explore the many different identities of these Scottish

[1] John Lewis-Stempel, 'Scotland the Brave: Tough "kilties" battled for Britain in WWI' (23-03-2014) via http://www.express.co.uk/news/world-war-1/466382/Scotland-the-brave-Tough-kilties-battled-for-Britain-in-WWI (21-11-2014).

[2] Ted Neville, *The Scottish Regiments* (Ramsbury, 1999) 4.

[3] Neville, *The Scottish Regiments*, 4; Edward M. Spiers, *The Scottish Soldier and Empire 1854-1902* (Edinburgh, 2006) 1-17; Graeme Morton, 'What if? The Significance of Scotland's Missing Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century', in: Dauvit Broun, R.J. Finlay and Michael Lynch (eds.), *Image and Identity. The Making and Re-making of Scotland Through the Ages* (Edinburgh, 1998) 157-176: 166.

[4] H. Strachan, 'Scotland's Military Identity', *The Scottish Historical Review* 85 (2006) 315-332: 327-328; Spiers, *The Scottish Soldier*, 209-211; Edward M. Spiers, *The Army and Society, 1814-1914* (London and New York, 1980) 48-49; T.M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation, 1700-2000* (St Ives, 1999) 309.

soldiers, mostly focusing on the interaction between the Scottish and British identity. How did the Scots serving in the British army during the First World War view their identity, and how did the war impact upon their feelings of identity? A war having no precedent in history, it was bound to influence their lives. The ANZAC participation in the First World War became a fundamental part of the national identity, with Gallipoli (1915) being the defining point of its 'coming of age' as a nation. Would the First World War do the same for Scotland too?

With 2014 marking the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, the attention for the Great War both in the United Kingdom and abroad is currently at its peak. Memorial services, events, exhibitions, series and documentaries and new publications flood the market. Both in popular circles and in academia World War I is a hot topic once again. Moreover, with the recent revival of the nationalist movements in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, and especially the referendum on Scottish independence in September 2014, the Scottish national identity is ever so relevant. United with England by the Act of Union in 1707, Scotland has always had a degree of autonomy, for example having its own law courts. After Great Britain's imperial retreat in the 1960s and the loss of a common purpose, people again started to question the existence of Great Britain. No longer four nations united by an imperial mission, the voices for independence have won support over the past few decades, particularly in Scotland. Especially since the 1980s, the Scots seem to prefer their Scottish identity over their British identity. This is for example visible in the increasing support for the Scottish National Party (SNP) as well as a number of referendums on devolution (1979, 1997, 2014). This leads both researchers and the general public to once again ask questions about national identities within Great Britain and to research what exactly it means to be Scottish and British. Should Great Britain be one nation representing many people, or should it be a union of nations, each having its own identity?[5]

As this suggests, research on nationalism and national identity has not lost its relevance in today's world, and both remain important topics for research among historians. Recent developments in Great Britain have sparked a new round of publications, mostly by social scientists, who go out 'in the field' to question Scots on their identities. For historians this literature is only of limited relevance, as identities that are relevant today were not necessarily equally important a hundred years ago.

Mostly leaving aside this newer research on the United Kingdom and Scotland, for my thesis I mainly use two other types of secondary sources: more general theoretic literature on

[5] Krishan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge, 2003) 6, 240-1.

nationalism by scholars such as Antony D. Smith (*National Identity*, 1990), Ernest Gellner (*Nations and Nationalism*, 1983; *Culture, Identity and Politics*, 1987; *Nationalism*, 1997), Benedict Anderson (*Imagined Communities*, 1983) and especially Eric Hobsbawm (*Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 1990; *The Invention of Tradition*, 1983) as well as literature more specifically about nationalism in Great Britain and Scotland. As the merits of the academics of the former category are well-known, a few words remain to be said about the more specific literature.

Most historical research on Scottish identity focuses on the period between 1690 and 1750, the nineteenth century as well as the period after 1960. For my research, the nineteenth century is most relevant. The most important of these works are written in the 1990s, after the first referendum on devolution (1979) took place.[6] No research on Scottish identity can be done without referring to British identity. Only from the 1960s onwards, with the collapse of the British Empire, scholars started asking questions about what exactly is Great Britain, and how the British identity can be distinguished from the English. For my thesis, I mainly rely on the work of Linda Colley and especially Krishan Kumar.[7] Although these scholars do not focus on Scotland specifically, next to information on British imperial identity, their work also contains information on Scottish nationalism.

The First World War period does not receive a lot of attention from scholars working on Great Britain and nationalism. The only article written about British nationalism in this period focuses on English nationalism, without any references to Scotland.[8] Most of the aforementioned works on British and English/Scottish identities are of a more general nature and with the exception of Linda Colley, they devote little space to the link between warfare and national identity, let alone the First World War. This thesis is my contribution to reducing this gap in our knowledge, providing a snapshot of how national identity works among a specific group of young Scottish men going out to fight on behalf of Britain in the early twentieth century.

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[6] Morton, 'What if?'; John M. MacKenzie, 'Empire and National Identities: the Case of Scotland', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 8 (1998) 215-231; Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland', in: Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983 [2000]) 15-42; Ewen A. Cameron, 'Embracing the Past: The Highlands in Nineteenth Century Scotland', in: Dauvit Broun, R.J. Finlay and Michael Lynch (eds.), *Image and Identity. The Making and Re-making of Scotland Through the Ages* (Edinburgh, 1998) 195-219.

[7] Linda Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness: An Argument', *The Journal of British Studies* 31.4 (1992) 309-329; Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*; Krishan Kumar, 'Empire and English Nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism* 12.1 (2006) 1-13; Krishan Kumar, 'Negotiating English Identity: Englishness, Britishness and the Future of the United Kingdom', *Nations and Nationalism* 16.3 (2010) 469-487.

[8] Frans Coetzee, 'English Nationalism and the First World War', *History of European Ideas* 15.1-3 (1992) 363-368.

In order to answer my research question, next to the above mentioned secondary literature I have also used a large number of primary sources, such as diaries, letters, army histories, autobiographies and poetry. With the exception of the army histories, all genres are well-known. Some words therefore remain to be said about the army histories only. Army histories are accounts of the exploits of particular army units (battalions, regiments, divisions) during the war, often written by one of its officers and published shortly after the war. Although they cover the actions of one particular unit, these army histories often mix the general with the personal, with the officers extensively describing their own experiences and thoughts as well.

In my thesis, I refrain from selection and use all sources I am able to find online as well as in the libraries in the Netherlands. My criteria for inclusion of the sources in this thesis are only two: the author has to be Scottish (either by birth or by heritage) and he has to have served in the armed forces during the war. I am particularly interested in how soldiers viewed their identity and how serving in the army impacted upon their views of national identity. Therefore I leave out sources written for example by nurses. The poetry of Charles Murray, who served in the home defense forces rather than at the front, however is included.

I have tried to include a wide variety of different primary sources, but in many cases it proved difficult to find out whether sources that are labeled 'British' online were written by Scots or not, making the number of accounts written by Scots serving in non-Scottish regiments fewer than those written by Scots in Scottish regiments. Accounts of ordinary privates too are difficult to find and those that I have been able to trace can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Indeed, the majority of the sources available online and in print in the Netherlands were written by lower-ranking officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs). Although Scotland's system of free elementary state education until the age of 12 had been in place for many years in 1914, the average Scottish private was hardly a literary man it seems. Even though a number of sources written by ordinary privates might be found in archives in the UK, it must be assumed that the selection of material available online and in print is also representative of the sources written in general. Ordinary Scots did serve in the armed forces during the war, but they did not leave behind a large number of written accounts of their service. In any case, the issue of national identity among Scots serving in the British army during the First World War is complicated, and my thesis provides only a first possible answer to this question.

To conclude this introduction, a few words on the structure of this thesis. In the first chapter I delve into the theory of Scottish and British nationalism as well as the importance of

the military for Scotland's national identity, to provide the background for the story. In this chapter I will also discuss identity and identity formation in more detail, providing a theoretical framework. In the second chapter, the focus shifts to the First World War and the Scottish soldiers serving in the British army, exploring their different identities more generally using a wide range of primary sources. Focus hereby is mainly on the ordinary privates, NCO and lower-ranking officers. An officer as Sir Douglas Haig, the Scotland-born Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force is left out, as his experience is quite different from that of the ordinary Jock, whether belonging to the Regular Army, Territorial Army or New Army battalions.[9] The third chapter focuses on a number of case studies. Looking into some Scottish soldiers serving in Scottish and non-Scottish regiments, I analyze how they specifically view their identity. Taking high- and low-ranking officers and ordinary privates with different backgrounds, in this chapter I delve more in-depth into the diverse identities of Scottish soldiers, complementing the theoretical framework and background information of chapter one and the more general story of chapter two with some examples of how national identity worked in practice. Studying a number of soldiers in detail will also allow me to better assess how exactly Scots serving in the First World War were changed by their war experiences.

[9] Haig's experiences however are comparable to those of Sir Ian Hamilton, whose writings are discussed in-depth in the final chapter. Douglas Haig, *Sir Douglas Haig's Despatches (December 1915-April 1919)* (London and Toronto, 1919) viahttps://archive.org/details/sirdouglashaigsd00haiguoft (06-01-2015).

Chapter 1

1.1. Nations and nationalism: the cases of Great Britain and Scotland

What exactly is a nation is a question that has haunted academics for decennia now. A clear-cut answer is difficult to give, but Benedict Anderson's definition seems a good starting point. According to Anderson all nations are 'imagined communities', produced and reproduced as distinct political units, each having their own 'identity' and their own collective myths. This national identity is shared collectively and the myths are transmitted through education, politics, media etc. Traditionally, the army is also part of this socialization process. People forming one nation have distinct ideas about their common culture, territory and history. Solidarity is reserved for the members of the ingroup, whereas members of the outgroup are excluded from this collective identity.[10]

For constructing this national identity, members first and foremost stress national 'exceptionality' and intragroup uniformity and homogeneity. Emphasis is on similarities rather than differences. Although not all differences can be eliminated, they are subordinated to the national identity. At the same time, through this process, ingroups also construct differences between themselves and outgroups. This is all the more important when a certain outgroup is similar to the ingroup, as is for example the case with the Scottish and the English.[11]

Not all nations are the same. The famous historian Friedrich Meinecke in *Cosmopolitanism and the National State* (1907) distinguishes between cultural nations (*Kulturnationen*) and political nations (*Staatsnationen*). In his view, cultural nations are based on a shared cultural heritage (language, literature, religion, etc), whereas political nations are based on a shared political history (monarchy, parliament, constitution, etc). This is a distinction particularly relevant in the case of Great Britain. Scottish nationalism is a form of cultural nationalism. Whereas the inhabitants of England follow the Anglican church most Scots are Presbyterians, and religious difference within Great Britain is one of the factors that has shaped a different cultural identity for Scotland. Similarly, the independent Scottish law courts have also influenced the Scottish identity. British nationalism on the other hand fits the

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[10] Ruth Wodak, Rudolf de Cillia, Martin Reisigl and Karin Liebhart, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity* (2nd edition, Edinburgh, 2009) 3-4; Robert Pope, *Religion and National Identity. Scotland and Wales, c. 1700-2000* (Cardiff, 2001) 7.

[11] Wodak, De Cillia a.o, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, 3-4; Patrick Colm Hogan, *Understanding Nationalism. On Narrative, Cognitive Science, and Identity* (Ohio, 2009) 57.

second category, of political nationalism. All inhabitants of Great Britain for example are subjects of the British king and queen and there is one constitution in place for all British citizens.[12]

Cultural and political nationalism do not necessarily have to contradict, but can exist together:

> 'One could both retain one's distinctiveness in ethnic or even national terms and, at the same time, share in the new British identity ... There is nothing unusual in this combination – one might even say that something like it has been the norm for most people, for most of the time. There *are* limits to the number of identities that any one person can carry at any one time, nor can they all have equal saliency. But this does not confine the individual to the straitjacket of one exclusive identity, national or other, nor does it preclude the emergence of new identities, sometimes with remarkable speed … The problem as so often has been the belief in an 'either-or' model: either Britishness or Scottishness, Britishness or Englishness, etc. Nothing in what we know about ethnic or national identities should compel us to accept such a model .. It is the modern insistence that we have one overriding national identity that is the anomaly, not the acceptance of multiple identities'.[13]

As Krishan Kumar explains, from the eighteenth century onwards the British develop multiple identities, belonging to more than one group at the same time. They have regional and supraregional identities, cultural, linguistic, ethnic, political and religious identities. These identities – not all equally important – could sometimes contradict, but also overlap. As we shall see in the next chapters, the Scottish soldier serving in the First World War could be both Scot and Brit.[14]

British nationalism in the nineteenth and early twentieth century focused on the constitutional monarchy, Protestantism, the common ethnic background (Saxon-Teutonic) and especially the British Empire. English, Welsh, Irish and Scottish all prided in their role as builders of a worldwide empire, engaged in a mission to bring civilization to the world. Faced with non-Europeans, the British found a common goal and a shared identity, in which all four nations could take part, not as colonizers and colonized, but truly as equals. Imperial service became a matter of pride for the non-English, compensating for the 'feeling of inferiority' experienced within Great Britain itself, where they were merely junior partners of the English. Within this framework, they retained their cultural distinctiveness when faced with English

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[12] Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 21, 85, 147.
[13] Ibidem, 145, 149.
[14] Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 145, 149; Wodak, De Cillia a.o, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, 16-17; Hogan, *Understanding Nationalism,* 9, 57.

dominance at home. Abroad, they were not just Britons, but also Scots. British nationalism incorporated the English, Welsh, Irish and Scottish identities, without effacing them.[15]

As this suggests, Scottish identity was defined in the context of the larger British identity after 1707. Nothing influenced Scottish identity as England on the border. The English were 'the other', against whom the Scottish identity was defined. At the same time, the Scots were not beyond accepting English customs as 'British'.[16] Scotland, in Mark Goldie's words, 'acquired a complex dual identity, a civic Britishness overlying a Scottish cultural identity'[17]. The Scots became British, without losing their Scottish identity. Clinging to the church and the Scottish law(courts), the Scots valued their separate identity – although a Lowland Scot from Edinburgh would most likely have had more in common with an Englishman from Birmingham or London than with the Highlander that came to determine the image of Scotland in the nineteenth century.[18]

Indeed, until quite recently the Highlands was a place the civilized Scot had nothing to do with. In their eyes, the barbarous, irreligious and unsophisticated inhabitants of the Highlands were not unlike their surroundings: wild and unpredictable. Being a Highlander was equaled to being a thief and rebel, and in the eyes of both the ruling elite and clergy the area was in dire need of more state control and its people of religious and moral development. Although the Lowland and later British rulers systematically tried to incorporate the Highlands into their kingdom, the idea of the Highlands as a distinct area long remained, providing the Lowlanders and English with a common civilization mission within Great Britain itself. Indeed, even in the beginning of the nineteenth century many Lowlanders still looked down upon Highlanders as 'bare arsed savages'. The other way around too, Highlanders viewed both Lowlanders and English as 'foreign'. Ironically, in the course of the nineteenth century the traditions of the poorest and most underdeveloped part of Scotland became synonymous with the whole of Scotland. The traditions that we nowadays consider as distinctively Scottish, such as the bagpipes and the kilt, are all of Highland origin.[19]

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[15] Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, X-XI, 85, 146, 149,170- 172, 187; Christopher Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism. Scottish Society and Politics: 1707 to the Presen*t (4th edition, London and New York, 2004) 47; Stephen Velychenko, 'Empire Loyalism and Minority Nationalism in Great Britain and Imperial Russia, 1707 to 1914: Institutions, Law, and Nationality in Scotland and Ukraine', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 39.3 (July 1997) 413-441: 413-441.

[16] Pope, *Religion and National Identity,*9-11; William Ferguson, *The Identity of the Scottish Nation: A Historic Quest* (Edinburgh, 1998) 192-193.

[17] Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 149.

[18] Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 6, 135; Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness', 314-315.

[19] Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 6, 135; Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness', 314-315; T.M. Devine, *Clanship to Crofters' War. The Social Transformation of the Scottish Highlands* (Manchester and New York, 1994 [1996]) 84-85.

In the nineteenth century, under the influence of the Romantic movement and following a new emphasis on ethnicity and the national 'soul', Scotland's Celtic past was rediscovered: a national culture that was non-English. A distinctively cultural nationalism, Scottish nationalists at this time generally only asked for 'home rule', and not the breakup of Great Britain. Whereas Irish nationalism radicalized in the First World War period, Scottish nationalism long remained a cultural nationalism, without the Scots seeking to establish their own state. This topic has only been put on the agenda very recently.[20]

1.2. Scotland's military identity

Military service played an important role in Scottish identity formation in different periods, first as the bulwark in which Highland traditions were preserved, and later in the creation of a distinct Scottish identity that was different from the British, providing them with a special role within Great Britain. Military service bound Highlanders and Lowlanders together, establishing a common Scottish identity symbolized by Highland icons.

The first Scottish regiment, the Royal Scots, can trace its line back to 1678, making it one of the eldest infantry regiments in the British army. It took another sixty years before the first Highland regiment was raised. The Black Watch was created in 1739, a few years before the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, in which they fought on behalf of the government against their fellow Highlanders. The creation of this first Highland regiment was not yet part of a consistent policy on the part of the state, but especially in the nineteenth century the crown constantly tried to direct the martial mind of the Highlanders from rebellion to warfare on behalf of the state through the formation of distinct Highland regiments, who undertook defense tasks both home and abroad, serving in all corners of the British Empire.[21]

After the Jacobite Rebellions of the eighteenth century, the military was one of the principal institutions in which the Highland traditions were maintained. In an attempt to annihilate the danger the Highland clans presented to the British state, the Disarming Act (1746) had forbidden any Highlander to wear Highland dress or carry arms (including bagpipes, as these were considered weapons of war as well). Until the late eighteenth century,

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[20] Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity*, 148, 200-1, 247-8; Antony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London, 1991) 74; Michael Laffan, *The Resurrection of Ireland. The Sinn Féin Party, 1916-1923* (Cambridge, 2004).

[21] Trevor-Roper, 'The Highland Tradition', 23; Neville, *The Scottish Regiments*, 4; Devine, *Clanship to Crofters' War,* 91-92; Hugh Trevor-Roper, *The Invention of Scotland* (New Haven and London, 2009) 205-206.

only Scottish soldiers serving in the British army were exempted from this law. Remaining valid for nearly half a century, the Act almost destroyed the distinct Highland culture.[22]

The visit of King George IV (r. 1820-1830) to Edinburgh in 1822 was a symbolizing turning point in the imagology surrounding the Highlands. Not only had the Scottish nobility dusted down the kilt for the occasion, the British monarch too appeared in kilt. After the repeal of the Disarming Act, the Scottish elite started to wear the kilt. This in itself was curious enough, as the kilt had traditionally been the garb of the Highland poor. The heroic deeds of the Highland regiments abroad however had given the kilt a prestige it never had before. Inspired by the Romantic movement that swept Europe, in Scotland a renewed interest in the Highlands arose among the elite. The rapidly changing environment of the Industrial Revolution led many to look back upon the rural past with nostalgia. Increasingly, this rural past was identified with the Highlands. No longer able to threaten the British state, the rapid disappearance of the Highland culture combined, in Trevor-Roper's words, 'the romance of a primitive people with the charm of an endangered species'.[23]

As regiments were raised and abrogated fairly quickly, a real regimental identity did not exist before the nineteenth century – with the possible exception of the Black Watch. Scots serving in the British army did however acquire a national identity: a sense of Scottish nationhood began to develop in the course of the eighteenth century, as there was no strict separation between Highlanders and Lowlanders. Highlanders served in Lowland regiments and the other way around. Although some regiments, such as the 93rd (1,070 soldiers in 1854 of whom 940 were Highlanders, most of them Gaelic-speaking too), had strong links to a local community and were almost exclusively manned by Highlanders, this had ceased to be the case for most Highland regiments by the mid-nineteenth century. The 78th, of which barely half was Highland born and bred, was more representative of the general trend. By 1878 of the 19 Scottish regiments only 3 regiments recruited more than 60% of their men and officers from Scotland. Most of these Scots serving in the Highland regiments were not even from the Highlands originally, instead they were from the urban areas of Lowland Scotland. Moreover, some Scots choose not to serve in Scottish regiments. Many officers in English regiments for example were of Scottish origin as well.[24]

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[22] Spiers, *The Scottish Soldier*, 2; Trevor-Roper, 'The Highland Tradition', 20-23; Frank Adam, *The Clans, Septs, and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands* (Edinburgh, 1908 [1970]) 439; Trevor-Roper, *The Invention of Scotland*, 191-215.

[23] Trevor-Roper, 'The Highland Tradition', 24-25, 29.

[24] Spiers, *The Scottish Soldier*, 10-12; Neville, *The Scottish Regiments,* 4; Spiers, *Army and Society*, 48; Devine, *Clanship to Crofters' War,* 92.

For Scottish regiments, identity was closely tied to dress. Most Highland regiments wore the government or Black Watch kilt, some of them with a minor change in detail. A yellow stripe was added for example to the tartan of the 92nd regiment. Others wore the tartan of a certain clan, as did for example the 79th regiment, which wore the Cameron tartan. When six out of eleven Highland regiments lost their pipers, tartan and Highland title after the Napoleonic Wars because of recruiting difficulties none of these regiments resigned to the loss of their Highland status, and each put efforts into regaining it. In the course of the nineteenth century, a number of regiments were successful in doing this. The 72nd for example had regained its Highland title by 1823, and wore tartan trews until the amalgamations of the 1880s, after which it returned to the kilt.[25]

Especially the military reforms of the 1880s played an important role in the reinforcement of a distinct Scottish national identity represented by Highland symbols. The coupling of the kilted Highland regiments to regiments that did not wear the kilt before to create two-battalion regiments instead of one-battalion regiments raised the number of kilted regiments from five to nine. The fact that the Lowland regiments now too wore tartan trews and Highland-style doublets strengthened the idea that there was one integrated Scottish identity, symbolized by the wearing of Highland dress.[26]

As the army reforms combined two battalions that in many cases had no ties to each other, instilling a regimental identity became more important than ever to maintain the discipline and raise the *espirit de corps*. Not just local or ethnic ties, but shared memories, traditions and a myth of origin bound regiments together. Both the military and regimental authorities actively created this identity from above, using rituals, symbols, parades, ceremonies and literature to boost the loyalty of the soldiers to the regiment. Although created from above, the efforts of the authorities met with great success: many recruits wholly, or at least partly, identified with their regiment, cherishing those regimental traditions that differed slightly from the traditions of other regiments.[27]

The establishment of 'difference' was followed by the creation of 'betterness', or inter-regimental competition. A distinct hierarchy of regiments existed in the British army. The position of a regiment was only partly influenced by its military standing: pedigree, connections to the crown and regional links were at least as important. Top of the list were

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[25] MacKenzie, 'The Case of Scotland', 226; Strachan, 'Scotland's Military Identity', 323-325; Spiers, *The Scottish Soldier*, 2-4.
[26] Spiers, *The Scottish Soldier*, 213; Strachan, 'Scotland's Military Identity', 325-327.
[27] David French, *Military Identities. The Regimental System, the British Army, and the British People, c.1870-2000* (Oxford, 2005) 77-98.

cavalry regiments such as the Household Brigade and the King's Royal Rifle Corps. Of the infantry regiments, the Highland regiments, the Light Infantry and the Fusilier regiments were the highest ranking regiments. Among the infantry regiments the Scottish regiments had a particularly high standing. The hierarchy of infantry regiments was topped by eight regiments, five of them Highland. Directly following this top eight were one more Highland regiment and three Lowland regiments. The lowest-ranking Scottish regiment, the Royal Scots, stood in prestige just half-way the ladder, above most English, Welsh and Irish infantry regiments.[28]

Inter-regimental competition had positive and negative sides. Rivalry lifted the standard of the British army in general. Trying to live up to the standards of their predecessors, soldiers rather died than they let down on the traditions and glory of the regiment. It however also meant that regiments sometimes had difficulties cooperating, as each regiment was after the same glory. Soldiers as well as the officers in command at times displayed a parochial mindset, preventing them from taking into account the larger picture. Every soldier was convinced that his own regiment was the finest, and they looked down upon regiments placed lower in the military hierarchy. Although competition was fierce in peacetime (and especially when it came to sport matches), wars however would usually make them do away with petty jealousies, binding regiments together in the face of a mutual enemy.[29]

The military was also important in identity formation on another level. Unlike the Irish or Welsh case, the Scottish imperial service was important in the making of a Scottish national identity that was different from the imperial British identity. Playing an important role in the British imperial expansion, when British colonialism reached its peak in the late nineteenth century, Scottish soldiers (and more specifically Highland soldiers) had become well-known empire-builders. The kilted soldier became one of the most important imperial icons. Serving the crown overseas not only contributed to a growing sense of a British national identity among the Scots, it also preserved and reinforced their national identity. The image of the Scottish soldier – propagated not only in imperial iconography, but also in art and popular literature – had an appeal beyond the people personally involved in empire-building. It appealed to the higher and lower classes alike, in the Highlands as well as in the Lowlands. Reinforcing the Scottish identity, the British imperial mission was as popular in Scotland as anywhere else in Great Britain. Scots prided in their military achievements, which

[28] French, *Military Identities*, 164-167.

[29] French, *Military Identities*, 2-3, 260-261; Steve Attridge, *Nationalism, Imperialism and Identity in Late Victorian Culture: Civil and Military Worlds* (Chippenham and Eastbourne, 2003) 65.

showed that Scotland was not just England's appendix, but a power in itself – and a military power too. Hardly the 'colonised in the colonies', the Scots served Great Britain in various functions – from governors to pro-consuls and from missionaries to soldiers – and considered it as their historic destiny and imperial duty.[30]

Splendid victories during the Crimean War (1854-1856), the Indian Mutiny (1857-1859) and the Mahdist War (1881-1899) reinforced the Scotsman's pride in the Highland regiments. The press made sure that their names were known all over Britain and certain regiments or generals became associated with particular battles. Lieutenant-Colonel (later Major-General) Hector MacDonald, the hero of the Battle of Omdurman (1898), for example toured the country after his return to Britain, delivering speeches. His funeral in 1903 attracted a large crowd, testifying to his lasting popularity. The image of the heroic Highland soldier was also spread through songs, plays, poems, engravings and paintings. More colorful than the average British soldier because of their dress, the Highland soldiers made good material for engravings, sculptures and paintings. Robert Gibbs' famous *Thin Red Line* was just one of many. Memorials, histories and memoires constantly reinforced this image. In the course of the nineteenth century, the Highlanders came to be seen to represent the 'martial spirit' of the entire nation, not just of the Highlands. Defeats had little influence on this heroic image. Priding in their service to the British Empire, the returns of the regiments from South Africa after the Boer Wars (1880-1881 and 1899-1902) were festive occasions, and ever more memorials arose, dedicated to the regiments and their generals. This would only reach its peak during the First World War. With the creation of four Scottish (9th Scottish, 15th Scottish, 51st Highland and 52nd Lowland) Divisions and the raising of countless new battalions, more Scots than ever before took up arms, serving at every possible front. That the 51st Highland Division - paradoxically mainly composed of Lowland Scots – was the most popular British Division of all at home should surprise no one by now.[31]

[30] Strachan, 'Scotland's Military Identity', 325; Spiers, *The Scottish Soldier*, 1-3; MacKenzie, 'The Case of Scotland', 220-225; Morton, 'What if', 160-163.
[31] Spiers, *The Scottish Soldier*, 4-17, 203-214; MacKenzie, 'The Case of Scotland', 226; Attridge, *Nationalism, Imperialism and Identity,* 45-46; Devine, *Clanship to Crofters' War,* 84.

Chapter 2

In this chapter I discuss the writings of Scots serving in the British army during the First World War and their different identities more generally, using both army histories and personal documents, such as memoires, diaries, letters and autobiographies. The majority of these documents were written by Scots serving in Scottish formations. Whether their sense of identity was shared by Scots in non-Scottish units is difficult to say based on a limited number of sources, but I will come back to this at the end of this chapter. What is important to note is that most of these sources included three different levels of identification: the local, the national and the imperial. Which of these levels received most attention differed from document to document, but only rarely one of the levels was entirely missing. We will start our exploring with the army histories. After that I will turn to the *espirit de corps* in battalions, regiments, brigades and divisions, ending this chapter with a focus on the Scottish identity of the soldiers.

In the British army during the First World War period, there was a strong connection between regiment and recruiting area. The King's Own Scottish Borderers (K.O.S.B.) for example recruited from southern Scotland, and G.F.S. Elliot's history of the 5th Battalion was not merely the record of a Scottish battalion during the war, it was also a record of the men of Dumfriesshire and Galloway during the war. Indeed, he regularly referred to the soldiers as 'Dumfries and Galloway lads', and took pride in the record of voluntarily enlistment the area held.[32] Some authors, such as Lawrence Weaver, even had this specific local group in mind while writing their history. Weaver's book was written to educate both serving soldiers and the 'men, women and children of the Lothians, Edinburgh and Peebles' about the history and traditions of their local regiment, the Royal Scots.[33]

Indeed, most of the Edinburgh recruits served in one of the many Royal Scots battalions, and although Edinburgh took 'a keen interest in every Scottish regiment', it was most intimately concerned with the Royal Scots. Edinburgh for example took pride in the 5th Royal Scots' successful defense of the British trenches at Gallipoli on May 1 and grieved when the same battalion was almost annihilated on June, 28, 1915.[34] Even when as a result of

[32] G.F.S. Elliot, *War History of the 5th Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers* (Dumfries, 1928) via http://lib.militaryarchive.co.uk/library/infantry-histories/library/War-History-of-the-5th-Battalion-Kings-Own-Scottish-Borderers/index.asp#/12/ (17-03-2013) XII, 14, 94, 138, 281.

[33] L. Weaver, *The Story of the Royal Scots (The Lothian Regiment)* (London, 1915) via http://www.archive.org/details/storyofroyalscot00weavuoft (06-02-2013) preface, V, 234.

[34] John Ewing, *The Royal Scots 1914-1918* (2 volumes, Edinburgh, 1925) via http://lib.militaryarchive.co.uk/library/Infantry-Histories/library/The-Royal-Scots-1914-1919-Vol-1 and

terrible losses on the battlefield the intimate connection between Scotland's capital and the Royal Scots could no longer be maintained and drafts from all over Scotland were needed to fill the gaps in the ranks of Royal Scots regiments, the citizens of Edinburgh continued to take a special interest in these battalions, revealing how closely battalion and recruiting area remained linked.[35]

But even when there was such a clear link with the local, authors placed themselves within the national and imperial framework too. For instance, next to educating locals about their own regiment, Weaver's second aim was to relate the exploits of the Royal Scots to the military history of Great Britain in the past three hundred years. In his introduction he portrayed Scots or 'North Britons' as fighting for civilization, liberty and the safety of the Kingdom and Empire, which indicates very clearly his outlook was more than merely local. At the same time too, Weaver's focus was very much on the Scottish nature of the unit. Indeed, the history of the regiment was traced back to the fifteenth century, long before Great Britain came into existence, and a few times Weaver mentioned how it was tried to preserve the Scottish nature of the unit, and how this either failed or succeeded. In this way Weaver succeeded in placing this local regiment both in the Scottish and British context.[36]

Particularly interesting about Weaver's history was his focus on Lowland Scotland. With Scotland having so many famous regiments, his fear was that the Royal Scots and other Lowland Scottish regiments were underappreciated and overlooked, especially because of their own modesty. Weaver went through great lengths to explain that the Royal Scots and not the Black Watch was Scotland's oldest regiment, expressing his annoyance with the 'prevailing ignorance, which regards no regiment as Scottish unless it wears the kilt'.[37]

This bitterness seemed to be shared by other Lowland regiments, such as the K.O.S.B., who complained that some recruits from the Border area preferred to join Highland regiments because of 'the glamour of the kilt'.[38] Similarly, they grumbled about Lowland regiments receiving Bantam or undersize drafts. As Bantams were not included in any of the Highland regiments, the K.O.S.B. officers felt that the War Office was favoring Highland regiments.[39]

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http://lib.militaryarchive.co.uk/library/Infantry-Histories/library/The-Royal-Scots-1914-1919-Vol-2/ (18-04-2013) 7, 138, 144, 163.

[35] Ewing, *The Royal Scots*, 278-279.

[36] Weaver, *Royal Scots,* preface, 5, 206, 39, 51, 141-143, 248.

[37] Ibidem, preface, XII, 206.

[38] Stair Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War* (Edinburgh, London and others, [1930]) via http://lib.militaryarchive.co.uk/library/Infantry-Histories/library/The-KOSB-in-the-Great-War/ (19-04-2013) 234.

[39] Officers of the 7/8th (Service) Battalion, *A Border Battalion: The History of the 7/8th (Service Battalion), King's Own Scottish Borderers* (Edinburgh, 1920) via http://archive.org/details/borderbattalionh00ediniala (17-03-2013) 104-105.

But despite this occasional grumbling, there is little proof that this really influenced relations between Highland and Lowland regiments.

How the balance between national and imperial in each army history was seemed mainly to be dependent on the background of the author. Comparing for example four histories of the K.O.S.B. (W. Sorley Brown – 4th K.O.S.B., G.F.S. Elliot – 5th K.O.S.B., Officers of the 7/8th Battalion – 7/8th K.O.S.B. and Stair Gillon – general history of the regiment during the war) you find four different balances between the local, national and imperial. The K.O.S.B. was a Lowland regiment with quite loose links to Scotland: indeed, their depot had been outside of Scotland for longer periods of time, and in the eighteenth century the regiment had even been the county regiment of Yorkshire and Sussex for some time. It is not surprising that therefore the foreword of the war history of the 7th and 8th Battalion focused on imperial service for Great Britain, but lacked the strong Scottish component that characterized Weaver's and Ewing's histories of the Royal Scots, a regiment with a much closer link to Scotland. In this history there was plenty about the regimental honor and serving Britain, but little on Scotland itself.[40] The same was true for W. Sorley Brown's history of the 4th Battalion, in which Scotland was not accorded a prominent place either.[41]

On the other hand, Elliot's history of the 5th Battalion was much more focused on Scotland, for example discussing the military history of Scotland before continuing to the regimental history and the exploits of the K.O.S.B. itself.[42] The latter was also the focus of Gillon's work. Although his work contained clear ideas about fighting for a just cause, for democracy and for the British Empire, Gillon mostly focused on Scotland and referred very little to Great Britain.[43] Although Gillon admitted that the K.O.S.B.'s connection with Scotland had not always been equally strong, he placed the regiment in the Scottish context, describing for example the role it played in Scottish military history and society and discussing the Scottish background of both officers and men. He too voiced his displease about taking away the 'historic title' of the Edinburgh Regiment, at the same time proudly adding that even then the K.O.S.B. never really lost the connection to Scotland, which was

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[40] Officers, *A Border Battalion,* IX-XX, 21; Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 1-3.

[41] W. Sorley Brown, *War Record of the 4th Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers and the Lothians and Border Horse* (Galashiels, 1920) via https://archive.org/details/warrecord00browuoft (09-02-2015).

[42] Elliot, *The 5th Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers*, 1-8.

[43] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 19, 312, 380.

recognized again in the 1880s with the granting of Lowland dress and the adding of the 'magic word Scottish' to the name of the regiment.[44]

Indeed, rarely was the imperial outlook completely missing, however much authors focused on Scotland. William Ewing for example saw the war a plot against the existence of Britain as a ruling power in the East and justified the fighting as the only way to protect the British interests in the Gulf and Mesopotamia. He too prided himself on the power wielded by the British beyond the borders of their 'own little island', and in the promoting and guarding of the freedom and welfare of mankind.[45] Brown too maintained the imperial perspective, calling for example the evacuation of Gallipoli 'a slut on Great Britain', as so many fine lads offered 'the supreme sacrifice for their King and Country'.[46]

This variety of outlooks was visible in Highland army histories as well. Taking for example the histories of the 4th and 5th Seaforth Highlanders, both focused more on Scotland than Britain, even though they too portrayed the war as a fight for justice and liberty. M.M. Haldane, in his history of the 4th Seaforths, contextualized Ross-shire in Scottish history, focusing on the Highland clans and battles fought in Scotland and portraying the Ross-shire men as fighting alongside the ancient ally France, as in the old days.[47] D. Sunderland too described the Seaforths as fighting for the honor of old Scotland, and he claimed that they could be proud of the contribution made by the northern battalions.[48]

Joe Cassels of the Black Watch put his battalion in the context of a historic regiment which had gone out to fight on Britain's behalf in all corners of the world since the eighteenth century. His perspective was both national and imperial. Calling the war a war for world freedom, he was proud to fight for the 'Rights and the Freedom of Mankind'.[49] At the same time, he kept the Scottish perspective, distinguishing between English, Welsh and Scottish and describing himself and his fellow soldiers as Highlanders and Scots having Scottish characteristics, such as courage and optimism.[50] Going back into regimental history, Cassels discussed cases in which the British government showed marked ignorance of Highland

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[44] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 19, 312, 380 1-13.
[45] William Ewing, *From Gallipoli to Baghdad* (London, New York and Toronto, [1917]) via http://archive.org/details/fromgallipolitob00ewinuoft (26-07-2012) 5, 195-198.
[46] Brown, *4th Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers*, 18, 51.
[47] M.M. Haldane, *A History of the Fourth Battalion The Seaforth Highlanders* (London, 1927) http://lib.militaryarchive.co.uk/library/Infantry-Histories/library/A-History-of-the-Fourth-Battalion-The-Seaforth-Highlanders/ (19-04-2013) 1-34, 53.
[48] D. Sutherland, *War Diary of the Fifth Seaforth Highlanders, 51st (Highland) Division* (London, 1920) via http://www.archive.org/details/51stseaforth00sunduoft (06-02-2013) 154-158.
[49] J. Cassels, *The Black Watch: A Record in Action* (New York, 1918) via http://www.archive.org/details/blackwatchrecord00cassiala (06-02-2013) 4-5, 239-242, 253.
[50] Cassels, *The Black Watch,* 4-5, 35-36, 50-51, 199, 205, 239-253.

characteristics and customs, expressing his understanding for their lack of obedience. At the same time, Cassels seemed to regard the situation in 1915 as much improved, as he – himself a Highlander – had no issues obeying the British government. Apparently there was no longer such ignorance regarding the Highland character in England.[51]

As the case of Joe Cassels shows, a soldier was part of a number of larger formations. The Scottish soldier took pride in all of them: his company, his battalion, his regiment, his brigade and eventually his division. Although 'the British army formed men from all walks of life into British soldiers with an uniformity of spirit characteristic of the army [every] battalion, like every other unit in the army, had its own character and individuality, that marked it off from every other'.[52] Indeed, this was true for battalions as well as larger units, such as regiments, brigades and divisions. This own character was difficult to explain or define, but we may quote Gillon for an attempt at explaining the spirit of one of the Scottish Lowland regiments, the K.O.S.B. According to Gillon, the Border spirit was 'distinctly but unaggressively Scottish, and distinctly and possibly a little more unmistakably military … it is a child with a very definite personality, which passes on from generation to generation and is absorbed by drafts and recruits with surprising rapidity'.[53] This was no less true for other regiments.

Warfare only accelerated this process. Indeed, often within weeks of signing up the men had adopted the regimental identity as their own. The own identity bound men together and tied them to their formations, and joint experience of warfare cemented these bonds. The pride and *espirit de corps* were probably strongest on the lowest levels: the battalion and the regiment, where soldiers actually knew each other. But even on the battalion level, men did not form a natural unit. For example, when the companies in the battalion of Corporal John Bruce Cairnie (5th Seaforth Highlanders) were merged, they were sorry about this. An amalgamation with F company did not really appeal to Cairnie's C company, as F seemed to be 'a pretty rough and coarse crowd'. But then again, Cairnie was pretty sure that they 'will improve on acquaintance', as indeed they would. Fighting together would always do the trick.[54] Although competition and rivalry within battalions was not unheard of, this did usually not exceed friendly rivalry. For example, in the 2nd Battalion Black Watch there was a keen rivalry among the platoons with regard to mounting the best guard. As the officers

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[51] Cassels, *The Black Watch*, 239-242.
[52] Haldane, *The Seaforth Highlanders,* 50.
[53] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, VIII.
[54] John Bruce Cairnie, 'The Great War Diaries of John Bruce Cairnie' (1915) via http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/The_Great_War_Diaries_-_1915_(5th_Seaforths) (09-03-2013) 7.

examined the guard every day, the whole battalion took an interest in the guard, and 'the smartness of the guard increased by leaps and bounds'.[55] In this way, intra-battalion rivalry uplifted the standards of all.

Soldiers often took immense pride not only in their company, but also in their own regiment and their specific battalion. Scout Joe Cassels of the Black Watch claimed to be part of 'the world's most famous fighting organization'. Indeed, he related how he had always taken the greatest degree of pride in being a member of his regiment, as 'no organized fighting force has ever had a record to equal that of the Black Watch'.[56] Recognition of the fine standards by others was however at least as important. Corporal Cairnie noted with pride that a Royal Scots officer had said that his battalion 'were the best looking battalion by a long way'.[57]

This regimental pride sometimes did wonders on the battlefield. For example, describing an attack during the Gallipoli campaign, Weaver related how almost outpaced by another regiment the Royal Scots gained new strength and energy when one attacker reminded them: 'Royal Scots, remember you are second to none!'.[58] Similarly, a Black Watch raiding party going over the top in the Gordon trenches was motivated by a desire to show the Gordon Highlanders 'what the redoubtable Black Watch could do'. This was appreciated by the Gordons, as they believed in warfare 'it is the self-assertive who conquer'.[59]

Battalions took particular pride in recognition not only from their fellow soldiers, but also from the press and the military command. If their particular contribution was not recognized in the press, both officers and men grumbled about this. For instance, Robert Lindsay Mackay of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders complained about the amount of praise the Canadians received in the papers for taking Vimy Ridge during the Battle of Arras (April-May 1917), not giving enough credit to the role the Scottish troops (his own 15th Division as well as the 9th Division) played in the battle. In his eyes without the Scottish taking of Monchy, the Canadians would never have been successful. Indeed, three Scottish Divisions were taken 'from widely different parts of the battlefield', so that they together

[55] H.J. Blampied, *With a Highland Regiment in Mesopotamia, 1916-1917* (Bombay, 1918) via http://archive.org/details/highlandregiment00blamuoft (09-03-2013) 35.
[56] Cassels, *The Black Watch*, 4-5, 243.
[57] Cairnie, 'The Great War Diaries I', 69.
[58] Weaver, *Royal Scots,* 247.
[59] R.B. Ross, *The Fifty-First in France* (London, 1918) via http://www.archive.org/details/fiftyfirstinfran00ross (06-02-2013) 189.

could take Monchy and reading only about the Canadians in the press was a big disappointment to all.[60]

Even more important than the press however was the opinion of the army command. Although Gillon's 29th Division in his eyes did not always receive 'the universal recognition it deserves', the knowledge that the higher command knew their merit was enough.[61] When not receiving enough credit from the higher command for their role in particular actions, regiments indeed held a real grudge against their generals. When the 8th Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) received as much praise as the Royal Welch Fusiliers for a particular action while they did all the fighting and the R.W.F. were in reserve, their officers complained. Taking an important tactical position as well as 350 prisoners, the C.O. of the Cameronians was instrumental in saving the entire Brigade, and yet neither he nor his men received any compliments from the Brigade H.Q., which was a grave disappointment to all involved.[62]

How important their own unit was to practically every Scot is very clearly revealed through examining the feelings of soldiers and officers temporarily posted to other units as well as their reactions to amalgamations of battalions and breaking up of brigades/divisions. They resented this, almost without exception. The only case in which amalgamation was not disliked immensely seemed to be the combination of the 2nd Black Watch and 1st Seaforth Highlanders into the Highland Battalion between February and August 1916. Both battalions regarded this period – in hindsight, so much is true – as a special episode in their history. Having fought together closely before in India, the two battalions were said to have had complete faith and confidence in each other, allowing them to maintain their traditions and enhance their reputation. On this particular occasion there was said to be no jealousy, but only goodwill between officers and men, and complete trust in the colonels.[63]

In most other cases, the resentment however was great. For instance, when the authorities posted different Highland soldiers to other units than their own, they not only created confusion, but also 'tried the temper of the men', indicating their displease.[64] The

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[60] Robert Lindsay Mackay, 'The Diaries of Robert Lindsay Mackay' via http://www.firstworldwar.com/diaries/rlm.htm (05-01-2014) A Slight Grouse; Author unknown, 'The Battle of Vimy Ridge, 1917' via http://www.firstworldwar.com/battles/vimyridge.htm (14-01-2015); Author unknown, 'The Arras Offensive' via http://www.1914-1918.net/bat18.htm (14-01-2015).

[61] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 210.

[62] J.M. Findlay, *With the 8th Scottish Rifles 1914-1919* (London, Glasgow and Bombay, 1926) http://lib.militaryarchive.co.uk/library/Infantry-Histories/library/With-the-Eighth-Scottish-Rifles-1914-1919/ (19-04-2013) 75.

[63] Blampied, *Highland Regiment in Mesopotamia*, 28-30; Author unknown, 'The Black Watch (Royal Highlanders' via http://www.1914-1918.net/blackwatch.htm (04-01-2015)

[64] F.W. Bewsher, *The History of the 51st (Highland) Division 1914-1918* (Edinburgh, 1921) via http://www.archive.org/details/historyof51sthig00bews (06-02-2013) 296.

reaction of the 7th and 8th Battalion K.O.S.B. to the proposed amalgamation of the battalions was less than enthusiastic.[65] Similarly, when the 17th Battalion Highland Light Infantry (H.L.I.) was disbanded and the men were spread over the various sister battalions, they considered themselves as 'orphans to be adopted by strange parents'.[66] Colonel Findlay, the C.O. of a temporarily disbanded Cameronians battalion, described this as 'the ruthless scattering of my flock', and the warm congratulations and many honors awarded upon his men only somewhat healed his wounds.[67] Henry Dundas of the Scots Guards spent some time away from his own brigade, and despite the other brigade being 'a charming lot', he was very happy to be amongst his own again on this return. Indeed, in his letters Dundas wrote how he would do anything to go back, to the extent of accepting a position below his rank.[68] To Robert Lindsay Mackay his Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Battalion was like a second home too, and he twice frustrated 'attempts to detach himself from it', to the extent of 'silently discharging himself' from the hospital to rejoin his battalion in the front line.[69]

A special feeling also existed between different battalions of the same regiment. Some sister battalions were able to socialize regularly, as did for example the 5th and 6th Seaforth Highlanders, who frequently had tea and play football together.[70] In many other cases however such meetings were really historic occasions and a reason for great rejoice. The army histories of the K.O.S.B. portrayed several of these meetings. In August 1915 for example, when the 6th and the 7/8th K.O.S.B. battalions met in France the march was halted, allowing the men to talk to each other.[71] Also on the Western Front, when the 5th K.O.S.B. were in the neighborhood of the 1st Battalion, the pipers of the 1st took the effort of coming out and playing them to their camp, which was greatly appreciated by the 5th Battalion.[72] Even when descriptions of meetings were unavailable, such as these taking place in May 1917, when four different K.O.S.B. battalions (1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th) were in the same sector, the author did not doubt that these were very exciting meetings indeed. The 1st and 2nd Battalion even found

[65] Officers, *A Border Battalion*, 64.
[66] Officers of the Seventeenth Highland Light Infantry, *The Seventeenth Highland Light Infantry (Glasgow Chamber of Commerce Battalion) Record of War Service, 1914-1918* (Glasgow, 1920) via http://www.gutenberg.org/files/20136/20136-h/20136-h.htm (06-01-2015) 74.
[67] Findlay, *With the 8th Scottish Rifles*, 109-110.
[68] Henry Dundas, *Scots Guards: A Memoir* (Edinburgh, 1921) via http://archive.org/details/henrydundasscots00ediniala (17-03-2013) 124-125, 135.
[69] Mackay, 'Diaries', Review.
[70] Cairnie, 'The Great War Diaries I', 111; Sutherland, *The Fifth Seaforth Highlanders,* 56.
[71] Officers, *A Border Battalion*, 26.
[72] Elliot, *The 5th Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers*, 8.

themselves holding adjacent trenches, and 'to celebrate such a wonderful reunion of two regular battalions of the same regiment' they decided on carrying out a joint raid.[73]

This special bond was not unique to the K.O.S.B. battalions. Indeed, meetings of the different Royal Scots battalions were also described in detail. John Ewing emphasized how rare these meetings were, relating how in January 1915 the 1st and the 2nd Battalions met only for the second time since the Crimean War. In the months afterwards many visits were exchanged, and in April a football match between the battalions was arranged.[74] The 4th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders lined the road to cheer on the 1st Battalion on their return from the firing line after a tough spell in the trenches.[75] Similarly, when the 11th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders marched past the resting 10th Argylls, they sent word of their passing ahead, and hundreds of Argylls met them in the opposite direction. It was a festive occasion, described by Robert Lindsay Mackay (11th A&S Highlanders):

> 'Brother met brother … Our fours suddenly became eights, and shouting was heard everywhere - in the richest Glasgow accents. All the 10th seemed to shake hands with all the 11th! They brought out their pipe band and played us along the road … The whole road was blocked by the composite 10th/11th. Argylls'.[76]

This special connection to a particular regiment was never lost. An officer might leave to join another regiment, but his former regiment always held a special place in his heart. Corporal Cairnie of the 5th Seaforth Highlanders for example joined the African Rifles in 1917, but was always happy to see fellow Seaforths, particularly these who had also served in his own 5th Battalion.[77] When on leave in Scotland or when temporarily away from his regiment, Robert Lindsay Mackay of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders too never ceased to think about his regiment, 'wondering how his friends are faring, and who will be missing when he returns'.[78] Whenever new officers arrived, the battalions too had a preference for officers of their own regiment, although others could also blend in. Alexander Mackintosh Shaw for example was 'K.R.R. by commission but a Borderer by adoption', serving all his foreign service with the Borderers.[79]

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[73] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 110.
[74] Ewing, *The Royal Scots*, 86.
[75] Haldane, *The Seaforth Highlanders,* 69.
[76] Mackay, 'Diaries', The 10th Argylls.
[77] John Bruce Cairnie, 'The Great War Diaries of John Bruce Cairnie' (1918) via http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/The_Great_War_Diaries_1918/1919_(King's_African_Rifles) January 1918 (11-10-2014) 49, 62.
[78] Mackay, 'Diaries', Review.
[79] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 95-96, 152.

No promotion severed this link. There was indeed a certain pride in high-ranking officers being raised from their own regiment among the officers and rank and file. For example, recognizing that a certain general 'would find greater scope in a brigade', the K.O.S.B. knew and appreciated that 'his heart was still with his Borderers'.[80] They also had special regard for Major-General Girdwood, who had been a staff officer of the 52nd Lowland Division, which included the 4th and 5th K.O.S.B. battalions.[81] Working both ways, officers too sometimes had difficulties taking up a higher command and kept thinking about their former regiments with much affection. Colonel Wauchope for example was not sure whether his promotion was altogether a matter for congratulation, having preferred to stay with his Highlanders rather than taking up command of a brigade.[82]

There was also a special feeling between the different Scottish regiments. This was not limited only to Scottish battalions in Scottish divisions. In the 32nd Division for example there too existed a special bond between the Scottish battalions. When the Ayr and Lanark Battalion of the Royal Scots Fusiliers left the division, the 17th Highland Light Infantry (H.L.I.) was very sad to see them depart, as the 'only other Scotch battalion in the Division', they were considered special friends.[83] When Scottish battalions met shouts like 'Scotland for ever!' were usually exchanged.[84] Socializing between Scottish regiments too was common. For instance, when the 9th, 15th and 51st Divisions as well as many Scottish battalions from other divisions (such as the 3rd and 31th) were all billeted around Arras, Arras was said to be a great social centre for Scottish troops.[85] Especially officers often socialized with officers from battalions stationed nearby. Next to having tea together, the battalions regularly played each other in football too. The 5th Seaforth Highlanders of Corporal Cairnie played the 4th Battalion Cameron Highlanders of their brigade, and 2nd Lieutenant Douglas Gillespie's battalion (2nd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders) played the Cameronians of their brigade in rugby.[86] And these bonds were not at all limited to battalions serving in the same brigade or division, as proves the example of the 4th Seaforths and the London Scottish, who were never grouped

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[80] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 377.
[81] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 256; Author unknown, 'The 52nd (Lowland) Division in 1914-1918' via http://www.1914-1918.net/52div.htm (14-01-2015).
[82] Blampied, *Highland Regiment in Mesopotamia*, 101.
[83] D.D. Ogilvie, *The Fife and Forfar Yeomanry, 1914-19* (London, 1921) via http://www.archive.org/details/fifeforfar00ogiluoft (06-02-2013) 121.
[84] Elliot, *The 5th Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers*, 250.
[85] Bewsher, *History of the 51st (Highland) Division*, 160.
[86] A.D. Gillespie, *Letters from Flanders, written by 2nd Lieut. A.D. Gillespie, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, to his Home People* (London, 1916) via http://archive.org/details/lettersfromfland00gilluoft (17-03-2013) 117; Cairnie, 'The Great War Diaries I', 91, 96; Author unknown, 'The 51st (Highland) Division in 1914-1918' via http://www.1914-1918.net/51div.htm (14-01-2015); Author unknown, 'The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders' via http://www.1914-1918.net/argyll.htm (14-01-2015).

together and yet maintained close bonds.[87] Douglas Gillespie too mentioned visiting the 1st and 4th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders, but with neither regiment the Argylls were ever grouped together.[88]

Still, fighting together was the best way to establish firm bounds between battalions, and the different battalions of a brigade and the different brigades of a division usually became good friends because of undergoing the fighting together. Strong bonds existed for example between the 6th K.O.S.B. and the 12th Royal Scots (27th Brigade of the 9th Scottish Division) and the 5th K.O.S.B. and the 5th Highland Light Infantry (52nd Lowland Division).[89] Gillon recalled how after a successful action, his 3rd Brigade was most touched by receiving notes of congratulations from the sister brigades in the 5th Division, the 15th and 95th, even though they hardly contained anything more than 'magnificently done'.[90] In the 51st (Highland) Division the 7th Gordon Highlanders were close friends with the 5th Seaforths, with whom they cooperated with great efficiency. As Captain Robert Ross (Gordon Highlanders) explained:

> 'If, for example, one battalion regarded its successor in the line with disfavour, if there existed any petty rivalry (for this was not unknown), or if reliance could not be placed on the undertaking of the incoming unit to continue the work in progress, then there was not the same incentive to honest labour'. But between the Gordons and the Seaforths 'trench cheating was an unknown vice … neither party would deliberately smuggle on to the return of trench stores handed over a dozen picks or shovels that could not readily be accounted for'.[91]

Indeed, as a result of the scale of the war during the First World War the natural tactical unit was often not the battalion, but the division. Not surprisingly therefore, next to pride in the regiment, soldiers also took pride in their brigade and division, creating a strong *espirit the corps* in brigades and divisions as well. This really was unique to the war situation: without fighting on a scale as large as this, the minds of most soldiers as well as officers would still have been limited to their own battalion and regiment, as indeed had been the case during previous wars.The First World War changed this. According to Ewing and Bewsher in the

[87] Haldane, *The Seaforth Highlanders,* 49; Author unknown, 'The Seaforth Highlanders' via http://www.1914-1918.net/seaforth.htm (14-01-2015); Author unknown, 'The London Regiment' via http://www.1914-1918.net/london.htm (14-01-2015).
[88] Dundas, *Scots Guards,* 99, 106, 240; Gillespie, *Letters from Flanders,* 272-273; 'The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders'.
[89] Ewing, *The Royal Scots*, 430-431; Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 247; Author unknown, 'The 9th (Scottish) Division in 1914-1918' via http://www.1914-1918.net/9div.htm (14-01-2015); 'The 52nd Lowland Division'.
[90] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 92.
[91] Ross, *The Fifty-first in France*, 135.

course of the war it became even customary to ask a soldier after his division and not his battalion.[92]

Every battalion regarded itself as the best in the division and his division the best in the army. In the 9th (Scottish) Division for example every soldier 'took an intense and jealous pride [in his division]; each man believed that he belonged to the best unit in the best division in the best army in the world … [and] even the meanest is roused to triumph over his natural timidity rather than allow the glory of his division to be tarnished'.[93] Indeed, soldiers would even wish for action, as every battle would bring fresh laurels to their battalion, regiment *and* division.[94]

This was no less true for the 51st (Highland) Division as for the 9th Division.

> 'One of the great factors on which the reputation of the 51st Division rested was its intense *esprit de division* …. No matter in what arm of the service he might be, the Jock was proud of the 51st. As a result, the various arms were all animated by the common ideal of enhancing the reputation of their Division. This feeling dominated the whole Division from its commanders down to the cook in the Divisional soup kitchen, and the old warrior, some sixty years of age, who drove the Foden disinfector.'[95]

Scottish Divisions such as the 9th, the 15th and the 51st Division toped the German list of divisions they feared the most and they took pride in this.[96] The 9th Division proudly noted that 'the Kaiser is reported to have said that, had other divisions fought as well as the 9th Division, he would have had no more troops to go on with'.[97] The 15th and 51st Divisions took immense pride in their place on the list as well, and the officers of the 7/8th Battalion K.O.S.B. related that they considered themselves as more than just members of a battalion. Instead, they were part of one great whole', the 15th Division, showing how strong the divisional *espirit de corps* was.[98]

This *espirit de corps* for example also involved protecting battalions of your own brigade and division against criticism from outsiders. Robert Lindsay Mackay of the 11th Argylls was not particularly impressed with the 6th Camerons in his own brigade. He voiced disapproval of them on several occasions, for example saying they guarded nothing but

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[92] Bewsher, *History of the 51st (Highland) Division*, 294.

[93] John Ewing, *The History of the 9th (Scottish) Division 1914-1919* (London, 1921) via http://lib.militaryarchive.co.uk/library/Divisional-Histories/library/The-History-of-the-9th-Scottish-Division/ (18-04-2013) 62.

[94] Ewing, *The Royal Scots*, 436; Dundas, *Scots Guards,* 93-94.

[95] Bewsher, *History of the 51st (Highland) Division*, 410.

[96] Bewsher, *History of the 51st (Highland) Division*, 204; Officers, *A Border Battalion*, 178-179.

[97] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 366.

[98] Officers, *A Border Battalion*, 13.

themselves during the German attack on Monchy. Regardless of that, the Argylls 'would never let an outsider say a word to us against them without getting on his top'.[99]

Not only valuing their battalion, but also their brigade and division, breaking up existing constructions was extremely unpopular. The reorganizing and breaking-up of brigades in the 9th Division in May 1916 for example was intensely disliked. Indeed, 'the inherent clannishness of the Scot revolted at the idea of friends being taken away and strangers coming in', however necessary. The only thing that reconciled them somewhat was that these 'old friends' were joining another famous Scottish Division, the 15th. Instead of fellow Scots, the brigade was joined by South African troops (one of the battalions wearing the kilt). They became good friends in time too. When the division received new battalions for instruction purposes some time later, they were afraid the high command wanted to take away their South African comrades. And when in August 1918 the moment came that the South African Brigade was withdrawn from the division, it was 'a great blow to everyone in the Ninth'. Some (and only some!) consolation was however found in the fact that a Scottish Highland battalion, the 10th Argylls, joined them in their stead.[100]

A similar reorganization took also place in February 1918, affecting the 51st Division. The 9th Royal Scots, the 5th Gordon Highlanders and the 8th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders had to leave the Division to join the 61st. To their consolation however, the three 51st Division battalions were brigaded together.[101] In June 1918 the same fate plagued the 52nd Division. When the infantry brigades were reduced, the 8th Scottish Rifles together with the 5th K.O.S.B. and the 5th Argylls were to form the new 103rd Brigade, joining the 34th Division. Leaving the brigade with which they had fought and suffered, leaving friends behind that they knew and knew them and in whom they confided, it was indeed 'a great shock and a very real grief to us'. That the other two battalions to go were also 52nd Division was 'a crumb of comfort', but they did not know anything about their 'other new comrades' of the 34th Division, which they disliked. Leaving behind their good friends of the 156th Brigade as well as their trusted Brigadier-General, 'it was a hateful parting'.[102]

As the example of the South African Brigade of the Highland Division shows, friendships were not limited to Scottish regiments only. The 17th H.L.I. trained together with the South Irish Horse Brigade and the Royal Warwickshire and Gloucestershire regiments of

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[99] Mackay, 'Diaries', Monchy – Camerons Do Well.
[100] Ewing, *The 9th (Scottish) Division*, 81-82, 218, 332-333.
[101] Ewing, *The Royal Scots*, 553-554.
[102] Findlay, *With the 8th Scottish Rifles*, 155.

the 95th Brigade, resulting in pleasant friendships between these regiments.[103] The Royal Scots fought together with the 1st Essex regiment, and after their 'natural Scottish shyness had worn off', the fighting together at Gallipoli established a bond between the regiments.[104] The 2nd Battalion K.O.S.B. was brigaded together with a battalion of the Royal West Kent Regiment, and between the two battalions existed 'a close friendship and mutual confidence'.[105] The 5th K.O.S.B. were 'always the best of friends' with the Indian 2/3rd Ghurkas and the 4th Battalion mixed freely with the men of the Egyptian army during their tour in Egypt. [106] The 15th and 16th Royal Scots helped in the training of American troops, resulting in strong friendships between Scots and Americans.[107] The Highlanders also felt closely related to the Bretons, who shared a great fighting tradition with the Scots. On one occasion their pipers accompanied the French during relief and during the march to their next destination, which was greatly appreciated by the Bretons, who themselves also had a piping tradition'.[108]

Not all Scottish units liked each other to the same extent. Although Corporal Cairnie of the Seaforth Highlanders held the 2nd Royal Scots Fusiliers in high regard, he was less positive about different Argyll battalions. The 6th Argylls even plainly made a very bad impression on him. The officers of the 7th Gordon Highlanders too were ridiculed for being 'too smart to need guides' and consequently losing their way in the trenches.[109] 2nd Lieutenant Douglas Gillespie of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders believed the H.L.I. officers were a little too pleased with themselves because they had been at the front first. The same officers were mocked for taking a tour in no man's land as some sort of picnic. Similarly, he believed the Cameron Highlanders looked very smart, but undoubtedly 'they have a great opinion of themselves'.[110]

This friendly rivalry was however nothing compared to the outright disdain they sometimes felt for some other non-Scottish battalions. In many cases Scots and non-Scots worked together pretty well. For instance, the 32nd Division, which included the 17th H.L.I., gave valuable assistance to the 60th Division at Gallipoli, with their Lewis gunners preventing

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[103] Officers, *Seventeenth Highland Light Infantry*, 22.
[104] A. H. Mure, *With the Incomparable 29th* (Edinburgh, 1919) via http://www.archive.org/details/withincomparable00murerich (06-02-2013) 21.
[105] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 20-21.
[106] Brown, *4th Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers*, 74; Elliot, *The 5th Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers*, 169.
[107] Ewing, *The Royal Scots*, 637.
[108] Bewsher, *History of the 51st (Highland) Division*, 31.
[109] Cairnie, 'The Great War Diaries I', 46, 56, 66, 86, 92.
[110] Gillespie, *Letters from Flanders,* 158, 309.

the Turks from taking the guns with them. Although the 60th Division actually collected the guns, they did not claim them but left them to be claimed by the H.L.I., 'in the true sporting spirit', which was greatly appreciated by the 17th H.L.I.[111] Similarly, the Field Ambulance of George Davidson was not at all too happy about receiving a draft from Wales, as 'every man is turning up his nose at the thought of a Welsh detachment'. But only a fortnight later, when the Welshmen were exchanged for a number of men from the Highland Field Ambulance from Aberdeen, they were sorry to let them go, as the Welshmen were doing excellent work.[112] In other cases however, relations were not that good at all. The Scottish Rifles for example were only willing to hand over a considerable amount of war material after receiving a receipt from the Australian cavalry. In duplicate, to prevent the Australians from appropriating their spoils.[113] Relations between the 51st Division and the Naval Division turned sour after a Naval Division priest knocked down an officer of the 51st and took off with 600 prisoners made by the 51st Division.[114]

This same disdain was never expressed for fellow Scots. Indeed, without exception Scots felt closely related to fellow Scots. This was the case for the rank and file as well as the commanding officers. Major-General Hare, commander of the 54th Division, while thanking his comrades and fellow-countrymen of the Scottish Rifle Brigade for the part they played in battle, expressed his pleasure at having Scottish troops under his command, especially since the brigade also included battalions from Edinburgh and Leith, which made it feel 'just like being at hame'.[115] The other way around too, the 2nd K.O.S.B. hoped to make a good impression at Gallipoli on their fellow-countryman, the Commander-in-Chief Sir Ian Hamilton.[116] The men of the 89th Field Ambulance related to Hamilton as well, as both he and his family came from their native Aberdeen.[117] When Lieutenant-General Ferguesson was promoted, he was much missed 'by the only Scottish battalion' in the division under his command, the 2nd Battalion K.O.S.B. This feeling was shared by the newly promoted general, who wrote on his farewell to the battalion how proud he was of them, adding that the 'fact that we are all Scotsmen adds to the pleasure'.[118]

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[111] Ogilvie, *The Fife and Forfar Yeomanry,* 66-67.
[112] George Davidson, *The Incomparable 29th and the 'River Clyde'* (Aberdeen, 1920) via https://archive.org/details/incomparable00daviuoft (04-01-2015) 206-207.
[113] Findlay, *With the 8th Scottish Rifles*, 113.
[114] Sutherland, *The Fifth Seaforth Highlanders,* 86.
[115] Findlay, *With the 8th Scottish Rifles*, 219.
[116] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 129.
[117] Davidson, *The Incomparable 29th*, 22.
[118] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 50.

It was an opinion shared by many that Scottish regiments ought to be manned by Scottish soldiers and commanded by Scottish officers. Captain Henry Dundas of the Scots Guards deplored that 'such magnificently Scotch men' were led by mostly English officers.[119] Gillon agreed with this, arguing that Scottish troops 'tended to herd under officers with glengarries'. In Gillon's opinion an officer like Brigadier-General Pollock-McCall or 'Jock McCall' from Ayrshire knew best how to appeal to his southern Scottish soldiers.[120] In some cases, such as when Corporal Cairnie's C.O. (5th Seaforths) was replaced by an English colonel, this indeed created 'a good deal of feeling', as the men believed an Englishman should not be put in charge of a Highland regiment.[121]

It was however not always necessary to be a Scot to be loved by the Scots. For example, General Harper, the commanding officer of the 51st Highland Division was English and no less loved for it. Bewsher indeed believed that no better commander could have been selected for the division.[122] The same was true for the Brigade Commander of the 5th H.L.I., whose experience was valued over his military lineage.[123] The fondness of some Englishmen for Scotland too was welcomed. Lieutenant-General Davis of the 7th Corps 'has a warm place in his heart for Scotland' and his admiration of Edinburgh and knowledge of the Border county as well as the Scottish church were appreciated by Chaplain Ewing.[124] An Englishman too was in charge of the H.L.I. at Gallipoli, and 'his interest and pride in his command could hardly be exceeded by a genuine Highlandman'. Indeed, he was even greeted by his fellow officers as a 'Brother Scot', indicating that being Scottish could also be an adopted identity.[125]

However, despite their appreciation for the skills of some English officers, the love for other generals was more personal. General Boss of the 152nd Brigade for example had been the secretary of the Territorial Force Association in his county before the war and he had known many of those under his command in peacetime too. He was a well-liked figure: 'General Boss spent so much of his time amongst his men that he was a familiar to them all, while he knew numbers of them by name, and in many cases knew also their parents, families, homes, and employers'.[126]

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[119] Dundas, *Scots Guards,* 74-75.
[120] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 36, 246, 288.
[121] Cairnie, 'The Great War Diaries I', 90.
[122] Bewsher, *History of the 51st (Highland) Division*, 72.
[123] Officers of the Fifth Battalion Highland Light Infantry, *The Fifth Battalion Highland Light Infantry in the War, 1914-1918* (Glasgow, 1921) via http://archive.org/details/5thbattalionHLI00fiftuoft (20-07-2012) 40.
[124] Ewing, *Gallipoli to Baghdad*, 127.
[125] Ibidem, 242-243.
[126] Bewsher, *History of the 51st (Highland) Division*, 70.

As indicated above and explained by Elliot and Gillon, Englishmen could easily be turned into 'naturalized Jocks' and loyal men to their regiments.[127] The identity of the K.O.S.B. for example was distinctively Scottish, but not aggressively Scottish, allowing non-Scots to feel part of the regiment too. Indeed, as Gillon clarified: 'an Englishman and a Scotsman may preserve their national characteristics and diversities to the grave. But put them together in the K.O.S.B. for a spell – and it doesn't take long – and both develop a second characteristic to be shared in common, namely, that of being Borderers'.[128] This was no less true for other regiments, brigades and divisions. The army identity and national identity were not exclusive. Gillon related how non-Scots could be proud to be part of a Scottish Division too: 'although rather less than half of the men came from Scotland, all were proud of belonging to a Scottish division.[129]

Scots of all ranks too were proud of the Scottish formations. The highest ranking Scot in the British army, Sir Douglas Haig (Commander-in-Chief of the BEF) was as proud of his countrymen as anyone, admitting that of all divisions, the Highland Division was his favorite, as it 'drew so many of its recruits from the same part of Scotland where my boyhood was spent and my own people lived'.[130] This feeling was shared by General Home, commander of the First Army, who wrote to the 51st Division after a great attack that he was 'proud to be a Scotsman at any time, but more than ever now'.[131] Gillon, in his history of the K.O.S.B. too devoted some space to the exploits of other Scottish formations, in particular the Scottish divisions.[132] When the Seaforths undertook a wonderful attack in Mesopotamia, every Scot too was proud of what the Seaforths accomplished, even if they believed they should have been the ones doing the job – as did for example the Black Watch.[133]

As noted before, most Scots valued their Scottish identity. An attack gone bad was considered a tragedy for the whole nation, and not just for one regiment. Little Scotland's tragedy was indeed personal. In the Battle of Loos (September-October 1915) and the Second Battle of Gaza (April 1917) were many Scottish battalions involved, and the many Scottish casualties made these battles 'a national blow to Scotland'.[134] The battles were compared to

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[127] Elliot, *The 5th Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers*, 291.
[128] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, VIII.
[129] Ibidem, 384.
[130] Bewsher, *History of the 51st (Highland) Division*, foreword.
[131] Ibidem, 320.
[132] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 380.
[133] Ewing, *Gallipoli to Baghdad*, 282.
[134] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 318; Author unknown, 'The Battle of Loos, 1915' via http://www.firstworldwar.com/battles/loos.htm (14-01-2015); Author unknown, 'The Second Battle of Gaza, 1917' via http://www.firstworldwar.com/battles/gaza2.htm (14-01-2015).

the Battle of Flodden (1513), the largest ever battle between Scotland and England, ending in a Scottish defeat, with many Scottish lives lost. All of Scotland was touched by Loos or Gaza, and 'in large areas between Tweed and Forth scarsely a household but mourned a son', making it a national tragedy – albeit not with the same impact on national identity as Gallipoli in the case of the ANZAC troops.[135]

Most Scots celebrated their Scottishness in one way or another. In all Scottish units, St Andrew's Night for example was celebrated with great gusto and Scottish papers as *The Scotsman* were devoured.[136] Next to football and rugby the Scottish battalions were also involved in more national entertainment. The 2nd Battalion Black Watch for example held a Highland Sports tournament, involving such sports as Highland dancing, record leap, donkey fight, mile race and tug of war. Non-Scottish troops (both British and Indian) were however also invited to take part in this kind of entertainment, which they did, showing that Scottish and non-Scottish soldiers socialized together even when the entertainment was particularly Scottish.[137]

And wherever the Scotsman was, his surroundings led his thoughts back to home. Whether the hills of Palestine, the rocks of Gallipoli, the woods of France, the streets of Arras or the rivers of Russia, his surroundings reminded him of Scotland, Edinburgh and of home.[138] The people he encountered in Flanders and France also reminded him of the people back home.[139] The soldiers too prided themselves on characteristics they considered particularly Scottish, such as tenacity, endurance, stubbornness, pluck and determination.[140]

The bagpipes too were appreciated by all army Scots, including those serving in Lowland regiments. Not provided with bagpipes by the War Office because of their Lowland status, the K.O.S.B. officers for example attached such importance to these Scottish instruments that they bought bagpipes with their own money. And this in turn was appreciated by the Border men, who were said to turn out in great numbers to hear them play.[141] Pipers leading long and tiresome marches were appreciated by practically every Scotsman, for they gave them new energy.[142] It also 'stoutened [their] hearts to face whatever danger or hardship

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[135] Gillon, *The K.O.S.B. in the Great War*, 243.
[136] Officers, *A Border Battalion*, 6-7; Findlay, *With the 8th Scottish Rifles*, 131-132; William A. Douglas, *Letters and Memorials of Captain William A. Douglas, 6th Battalion The Royal Scots* (Edinburgh, 1920) via http://archive.org/details/lettersmemorials00dougiala (17-03-2013) 164.
[137] Blampied, *Highland Regiment in Mesopotamia*, 35-38.
[138] Elliot, *The 5th Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers*, 186, 222, 243; Ewing, *The Royal Scots*, 385, 741; Davidson, *The Incomparable 29th*, 7-8, 141, 163; Mure, *With the Incomparable 29th*, 95-96, 105, 129.
[139] Findlay, *With the 8th Scottish Rifles*, 193.
[140] Ewing, *The Royal Scots*, 202, 489, 572, 516; Findlay, *With the 8th Scottish Rifles*, 144-145.
[141] Officers, *A Border Battalion*, 8-9.
[142] Blampied, *Highland Regiment in Mesopotamia*, 68.

lay before'.[143] 'It was impossible to describe the effect of the skirl of those pipes', related Joe Cassels. 'It was like a message from Heaven .... What joy we felt!'[144] Indeed, the bagpipes worked miracles. Pipe music made Scots square their shoulders, erect their heads, thrown their chests out and march gaily, instilling pride in every Scottish soldier.[145] Robert Lindsay Mackay (Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders) related proudly how the French and Americans were fascinated by the bagpipes: 'Lord! How we held our heads up high and stepped out when THEY were watching, just to show them that we - WE - were winning the war - and then the Americans would fall behind - and we would carry on for another ten bloody miles without speaking'.[146]

Like the bagpipes, Scottish dress was important for Highland and Lowland soldiers alike. For example, when during the preparations for the Battle of the Somme the 125th Brigade was stripped of their Highland dress to prevent the enemy from finding out which troops were holding the line this was 'much to the disgust of the men, who, suspicious of some Sassenach plot to strip them for ever of the kilt, grumbled very much and protested to their officers'.[147]

The Scots took particular pride in the interest they aroused not only among their fellow soldiers, but also among the local civilian population. Indeed, Scottish troops received very warm welcomes wherever they went, hardly being able to pass by any village without being delayed by enthusiastic Frenchmen. The Scots of the 51st Division for instance were questioned on their kilts by the French civilians until they 'blushed for shame'. The swinging kilts and bare knees of the Scots indeed were of 'unending interest to the French', with the local population 'dying of curiosity to examine our kilts'.[148] Concerts of the regimental bands always attracted large crowds too, regardless of the weather.[149]

Army Scots were however more than just Scots. This is visible when looking beyond the Scottish surface. Seeing King George V for example aroused enthusiasm in the Scots as well. The majority of the 7th/8th Borderers for instance lined up to see the king pass by when he visited the front.[150] Receiving congratulatory messages from his hand was always appreciated too. As John Blampied described, this instilled a feeling among the rank and file that 'the Head of all our race understood and appreciated all that had been endured suffered,

[143] Blampied, *Highland Regiment in Mesopotamia*, 29.
[144] Cassels, *The Black Watch*, 56-57.
[145] Officers, *A Border Battalion*, 8-9.
[146] Mackay, 'Diaries', Relieving The Americans And French.
[147] Sutherland, *The Fifth Seaforth Highlanders,* 69.
[148] Ross, *The Fifty-first in France*, 107-112, 125.
[149] Officers, *A Border Battalion*, 285-287, 298-300; Ewing, *The Royal Scots*, 13.
[150] Officers, *A Border Battalion*, 162.

and accomplished'.[151] The Scots, both Highland and Lowland, clearly identified with the Royal Family. Scottish funerals also often mixed imperial elements with components with a distinctive Scottish flavor. For example, although the coffin of a deceased officer did not have the Scottish flag but the British, the coffin was be accompanied by pipers playing Scottish songs such as 'The Flowers of the Forest', 'Land o' the Leal' and 'The Death of the Chief' as well as imperial tunes, such as 'The Last Post'.[152] The references to their British identity are however much rarer.

In this chapter I have mainly focused on the feelings of Scottish soldiers serving in Scottish units. Nonetheless, at the end of this chapter a few words remain to be said about Scots in non-Scottish regiments. The feeling of Scottishness described above – so strong in the Scottish units – might have been less strong among the Scots serving in non-Scottish units. Although the army histories often had a British component and there were Scots in Scottish units too who thought about subjects as the British Empire and imperialism, most did not give these subject much thought. A Scot like John Tennant, who served in the Royal Flying Corps during the war, displayed a much more imperial view than most Scots serving in Scottish regiments, discussing for example British imperial policies, criticizing preaching sedition and the right to vote for the uneducated mass, the Ottoman administration of Mesopotamia and forgetting about 'the benefits of a fair administration by English gentlemen'.[153] This imperial view was displayed by no other Scotsman. Although Major Mure for example compared Great Britain to the Roman Empire in his writings and saw himself and his men as upholding the British freedom he was still as focused on Scotland as any other Scot.[154] Yet despite the imperial perspective Tennant did not lose his connection to Scotland entirely either. When coming across a party of Tommies for example, he recognized their Glaswegian accent immediately, happily calling it a 'breath from home'.[155] In the next chapter we shall see that other Scots in non-Scottish formations, such as for example Charles Hamilton Sorley, had yet again different views on Scotland and Britain. It is to him we now turn.

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[151] Blampied, *Highland Regiment in Mesopotamia*, 62-63.
[152] Officers, *A Border Battalion*, 224-225; Dundas, *Scots Guards,* 246-247.
[153] John Edward Tennant, *In the Clouds above Baghdad, being the Records of an Air Commander* (London, 1920) via http://archive.org/details/incloudsabovebag00tennrich (26-07-2012) 112-114.
[154] Mure, *With the Incomparable 29th*, 134.
[155] Tennant, *Clouds above Baghdad*, 4-5.

Chapter 3

In this chapter I discuss the writings of five Scots serving both in Scottish and non-Scottish formations. They are carefully chosen: their ranks ranged from privates and non-commissioned officers to high-ranking generals. Most of them saw active service at the front during the war, and one served in home defense forces. They included both Highland and Lowland Scots, 'real Scots', Scots-by-heritage and Scots born and raised abroad. Charles Hamilton Sorley, Joseph Lee, Charles Murray and Ewart Alan Mackintosh were literary figures – some better known than others – and Ian Hamilton was one of the highest-ranking Scots in the British army. Together they provide an overview of the many different combinations of identities Scots serving in the British could have. This is however by no means a full overview. It is merely my attempt to discuss a few Scots and their ideas about their own identities as well as the impact of their war experiences more in-depth than was done in the previous chapter.

3.1. Charles Hamilton Sorley

Charles Hamilton Sorley (Aberdeen, 1895-1915) was born in Aberdeen, Scotland. Although born in the Highlands, both his parents were of Lowland Scottish origin. From the age of five Sorley lived in Cambridge, England, where his father taught philosophy at the university. The Sorleys however spent most summer holidays in Aberdeenshire, never losing their connection to Scotland. Charles Sorley studied at Marlborough College and won a scholarship for Oxford University, that he planned to take up in September 1914. Taking a break before going to university, Sorley left for Germany in January 1914. During his six months in Germany, Sorley studied the German language and culture in Mecklenburg and at the University of Jena. Living in Germany when war was declared, Sorley returned to England to enlist as a 2nd lieutenant in the 7th Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment – albeit not before spending one night in a German prison. His regiment went to France in May 1915, and Sorley was killed by a sniper during the Battle of Loos in October 1915. He had just been promoted to captain at the age of 20. His poetry, war-poetry as well as poetry written before the outbreak of war, was published after his death in

1916 as *Marlborough and other poems*, of which in the first year alone six editions were published. By 1919 the interest in Sorley had grown to such an extent that his letters were also collected and published by his parents.[156]

Living in Germany when the war broke out, Sorley had already been confronted with his national identity on a daily basis during the previous six months. In the letters written during this period Sorley did not write extensively about his identity, but it is clear that he felt Scottish, calling some of his habits and instincts 'Scots'. Using a limited amount of paper was Scottish, as was using pencil to write letters instead of ink and trying to spend as little money as possible. Parsimony Sorley considered one of his distinctively Scottish virtues.[157]

Regularly he found himself explaining to his new German friends that he was 'not English but Scotch', explicitly denying his links to England – despite spending the majority of his life in England instead of Scotland. Indeed, in his letters he referred to himself as 'the Schottlander', the Scotsman. That others also saw him as such is proved for example by a special invitation to join a Carlyle club, 'on being discovered to be of the same nationality as Carlyle'. Like Sorley, Carlyle was a Scot.[158]

That Sorley was no ordinary British patriot is already apparent before the war. He was extremely fond of everything German. During his stay in Germany he described his patriotism as being 'on leave'. Indeed, there is little in his letters to suggest that Sorley harbored warm feelings towards his own country. His admiration for Germany was never equaled by a similar esteem for anything British. A passage such as

> 'I felt I was a German, and proud to be a German: when the tempest of the singing was at its loudest, I felt that perhaps I could die for Deutschland and I have never had an inkling of that feeling about England, and never shall. And if the feeling died with the cessation of the singing well I had it, and it's the first time I have had the vaguest idea what patriotism meant and that in a strange land.'[159]

would not occur about Great Britain. Evoked by witnessing a number of military companies passing by, their singing about glory and the Fatherland impressed Sorley greatly, and for the

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[156] Charles Hamilton Sorley, *The Letters of Charles Sorley, with a Chapter of Biography* (Cambridge, 1919) via https://archive.org/stream/lettersofcharles00sorluoft/lettersofcharles00sorluoft_djvu.txt (01-06-2013) 1-12; James Kirschke, '"A Very Different Kind of Life": Charles Hamilton Sorley', *Midwest Quarterly* 49.2 (2008) 115-131: 115-131; Anne Powell, 'Two Centenary Salutes: Charles Hamilton Sorley and Robert Graves', *Gravesiana* 19 (without year) via http://www.robertgraves.org/issues/19/8630_article_21.pdf (20-12-2014) 21-32.

[157] Sorley, *Letters*, 67, 89, 159, 180, 269.

[158] Ibidem, 176. Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) was a Scottish philosopher, writer, essayist and historian.

[159] Ibidem, 97.

first time he experienced a feeling of patriotism. Paradoxically, this was caused by German troops, and not by British. Indeed, comparing the German companies with the British, Sorley judged that what would look stupid in England totally made sense in Germany. And undeniably, never in his letters or poetry he wrote with the same admiration about Great Britain as he wrote here about Germany.

In other letters too Sorley displayed his admiration for Germany. For example, comparing the Germans to the British, Sorley voiced his approval of how a German thought for himself (in contrast to the average Brit, apparently) and did not live in the moment, developing 'his own personality without reference to other people, without making it either absolutely the same or absolutely different from his surroundings, as the Briton always does'.[160] Again, the comparison was not positive for the British. According to Sorley, the Brit had no independence of mind, was incapable of thinking ahead, and was either too similar or too different, leaving little space for the middle road.

But despite all this criticism, Sorley did harbor a love for some parts of England. After joining the Suffolk regiment, Suffolk became his 'country by adoption'.[161] Any affection that Sorley may have had for Suffolk was however overshadowed by his love for Wiltshire. Although his upbringing in England did not turn him into a British patriot, he was extremely fond of this county. For example, discussing Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*, Sorley explained that he liked the book so much because it played in North Wessex, close to Marlborough, where Sorley went to school.[162] Similarly, he regarded the English writer Richard Jeffries as his countryman, explaining that he counted himself as a Wiltshireman too after six years at Marlborough College, although technically of course he was not.[163]

Indeed, as another sign of disapproval of British patriotism, Sorley judged Jeffries' writings as more healthy than other literature taught at schools in his days, such as the patriotic *How to become a British citizen*. Schools, argued Sorley, should try to teach their children how to be Wiltshiremen instead of Brits, adding that he disliked Britons a lot.[164]

Sorley was an exception to the rule. While the whole world around him became fiercely patriotic on the outbreak of war, Sorley was a realist, arguing that 'out of twelve million eventual combatants, there aren't twelve who really want it'.[165] During the training, his views did not change to a great extent. Indeed, he expressed hope that before his training

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[160] Sorley, *Letters*, 211.
[161] Ibidem, 234.
[162] Ibidem, 109.
[163] Ibidem, 201-202.
[164] Ibidem, 201-202.
[165] Ibidem, 221.

ended ‘the English will be in Berlin or the Germans in London: either of the two will do’. The question of national honor Sorley called childish and primitive, as was the focus on bravery and self-sacrifice as well as what he regarded as English ‘auto-trumpeting and Old-England-she's-the-same-as-ever-isms’. He also claimed not to believe in just wars, and commented sarcastically that ‘for the joke of seeing an obviously just cause defeated, I hope Germany will win’. Considering himself pro-German even after the outbreak of war, he defended what he called his ‘Fatherland’ (Germany) time and again, arguing that both sides had their own virtues and vices, and that like Britain Germany believed that what it was doing was best for humanity. Both were equally to blame for the war in his eyes.[166]

While training, he was looking forward to going to the front. Not ‘in the brave British drummer-boy spirit’, as he said himself, but ‘as a relief from this boredom’.[167] By November 1914, the sound of the word England made him sick. He hated how he ‘in training to fight for England, I am training to fight for that deliberate hypocrisy, that terrible middleclass sloth of outlook and appalling “imaginative indolence” that has marked us out from generation to generation’. Indeed, he believed that ‘after the war all brave men will renounce their country and confess that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth’.[168]

Voicing his love and admiration of Germany and his dislike of Britain time and again, why did Sorley join the army at all after returning from Germany? This never becomes entirely clear. It seemed to be both his conscience and the pressure from outside that forced Sorley into signing up. When enlisting, Sorley asked the enlistment officer ‘what can I do to have some reasonable answer to give to my acquaintances when they ask me, “What are you doing?”’. The enlistment officer then advised him to apply for a commission in the Territorial army, which he did. ‘Not heroic enough to do the really straight thing and join the regulars as a Tommy, I have made a stupid compromise [with] my conscience and applied for a commission in the Terriers’.[169] He certainly did not expect to get one, as no new officers were needed for the Territorials at the time. Least of all, he expected to be sent abroad. He may indeed have been the victim of circumstances over which he had no control, as he claimed while discussing the death of fellow poet Rupert Brooke.[170]

Not mentioning once any pride in being British, in-between all the hatred of the war Sorley did mention pride in his ‘Celtic origin’. For example, when watching an Irish play, he

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[166] Sorley, *Letters*, 224-233, 261-262.
[167] Ibidem, 255.
[168] Ibidem, 240, 261.
[169] Ibidem, 220.
[170] Ibidem, 263.

was reminded of home, which could only be Highland Scotland, and he indeed said to be glad about his origins (that none of his forefathers had Highland origins seemed merely a small detail).[171]

In his poetry Sorley was less outspoken than in his letters. A number of his early poems were dedicated to southern England. The title poem 'Marlborough' for example was about the small town of Marlborough where Sorley spent so many happy years in his younger years.[172] The church of East Kennet, the topic of 'East Kennet Church at Evening', was only a few miles from Marlborough.[173] 'Richard Jeffries' was about the Wiltshire-based author Sorley admired.[174] All these pre-war poems displayed his love for Wiltshire in general and Marlborough in particular, but nothing in his poems suggests that he really identified himself with the country of Wiltshire: that we only learn from his letters. His poems did not go beyond simple love of his surroundings.

His war poems did not reveal much about identity either. It made however clear that home for Sorley was not Scotland, but southern England. A number of poems had as theme a returning front soldier. 'XXIX' and 'XXIII' both involved a protagonist returning from the front, either on leave or permanently. 'XXIX' described the exact road the soldier took, and from the place names we understand that the poem was set in England and not in Scotland. The same surroundings were the stage for 'XXIII', where the protagonist found his home changed and unchanged at the same time.[175]

The only poem that revealed something of Sorleys' extraordinary view on the war was 'To Germany'. In this poem Sorley called both sides blind, unable to understand each other because of different outlooks. Clumsiness and misunderstanding reigned, and so the war continued. Blaming both sides and not merely defending England's path to war, Sorley was more neutral in his evaluation of the causes of war than most of his more patriotic contemporaries. The views expressed in his poetry were more forcefully written down in his letters, but his poems too revealed that Sorley was no ordinary Scottish patriot.[176]

Even in the colorful collection of individuals that Chapter 3 harbors, Charles Hamilton Sorley stands out. Despite living the majority of his life outside his native Scotland, he felt related to Scotland. Sometimes jokingly, sometimes more seriously, he referred to himself as

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[171] Sorley, *Letters*, 264.
[172] Charles Hamilton Sorley, *Marlborough and Other Poems* (Cambridge, 1916) via https://archive.org/details/marlboroughother00sorluoft (01-06-2013) 1-3.
[173] Sorley, *Marlborough and other poems*, 18-20.
[174] Sorley, *Marlborough and other poems*, 27-28; Sorley, *Letters*, 201-202.
[175] Sorley, *Marlborough and other poems*, 60-63, 76.
[176] Ibidem, 56.

a Scotsman – and not an Englishman. A difference he cared to point out to foreigners. And although he related to some parts of England (Wiltshire for example) he did not like to think of himself as British. Indeed, he was extremely critical about anything British, even to the point that he said to hate the British and the word England. If anything, it was Germany that evoked his feelings of patriotism, and not Great Britain. Sorley was indeed a great admirer of the German Empire, a result of a prolonged stay in Kaiser Wilhem's realm. Fifteen years in England however never did the same for King George's Empire.

Arguably Sorley's stay in Germany before the war was at least as important for his feeling of identity as the First World War. It was in Germany that he fell in love with the country and the people, and where he became aware of Britain's shortcomings more than ever before. It was in Germany too that he first experienced a feeling of nationalism, albeit not towards his home country. Throughout his stay in Germany, he was confronted with identity as never before. Continuing to identify himself as a Scotsman, he moved away from Britain in this period already. In the army, his feelings of identity only radicalized. Although continuing to pride himself on his Scottish ancestry, his loathing for Great Britain continued to grow during his training and active service. During his time he expressed his aversion against Great Britain and the Briton time and again, to the extent the name of his own country made him sick. A passionate admirer of Germany, having to fight his second homeland disgusted him. Believing in the good intentions of both sides, their lack of understanding for each other caused a war that his conscience and surroundings forced him to fight. Dreaming of a future in which nationalism no longer played a role, Sorley was killed fighting a country that he loved in the name of a country he came to dislike with a passion.

3.2. Joseph Lee

Joseph Johnston Lee (Dundee, 1876-1949) was a Scottish artist, journalist and poet. Born in a Dundee working class family, Lee started earning his own money at the age of 14, as his family could no longer afford to pay for his education. Lee worked first in a solicitor's office and later as a steamship's stoker, travelling the world. He turned to art and journalism later, drawing cartoons for newspapers and writing, producing and editing local journals. In 1909 he started

The Tocsin, a journal promoting the Dundonian labor movement. His first volume of poetry, *Tales o' Our Town*, was published in 1910. He also wrote a number of plays. *Fra Lippo Liippi, Painter of Florence*, was performed just before the war.

When the war broke out in 1914, Lee (almost forty, an established journalist and in no particular good health) enlisted as a private in the 4th Black Watch Battalion, together with a few other journalists. The battalion went to France in early 1915, and although initially refusing his commission Lee was promoted to NCO, eventually reaching the rank of sergeant. In 1917, when serving with the King's Royal Rifle Corps, Lee was captured by the Germans near Cambrai. He spent the remainder of the war in German prison camps. His poetry was published in *Ballads of Battle* (1916) and *Work-A-Day Warriors* (1917), and in his native Dundee he was consequently known as 'the Black Watch poet'. He also wrote *A Captive in Carlsruhe* (1920) about his captivity.

After the war Lee married and settled down in England, taking up journalism again. During the Second World War he served in the Home Guard, just before retirement. He returned to Scotland at the end of his life, dying in Dundee in 1949.[177]

Joseph Lee spent a considerable amount of time in Germany as a prisoner-of-war, first in Karlsruhe and later in Beeskow. What strikes the reader is that Lee, compared to other writers and poets, wrote relatively little about home. In his book Lee only referred to home occasionally, but when he wrote about home however it was unmistakably Scottish. He longed for his native town, Dundee, and his longing for home was triggered by reading novels such as *The Master of Ballantrae*, a novel by Scottish novelist Robert Louis Stevenson about the Jacobite Rebellion, an important moment in Scottish history. His homesickness was never as profound as when reading about Scotland.[178]

Lee full-heartily identified himself as a Scot. For example, one day Lee and a number of fellow prisoners played a 'draughts championship of the cell'. Winning, Lee accounted his victory not only to the fact that he played draughts as a boy, but also to the fact that he was a Scotsman.[179] A true Scotsman, he also acquired renown for the Scottish style dishes cooked on mess duty, such as fake haggis.[180] Serving as the camp librarian, Lee moreover provided his fellow Scottish prisoners, such as Captain Brown ('a Scot and an Edinburgh man'), with

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[177] Author unknown, http://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/poetry/poets/joseph-lee (28-11-2014).

[178] Joseph Lee, *A Captive at Carlsruhe and other German Prison Camps* (London, 1920) via https://archive.org/details/captiveatcarlsru00leej (20-09-2014) 25-26, 89-90.

[179] Lee, *A Captive at Carlsruhe*, 25-26.

[180] Ibidem, 93-94.

the same novels that reminded Lee so much of home.[181] He also taught one of the Italian officers English, because the man was 'on the maternal side of Scottish descent'. Not British, but Scottish.[182]

Lee identified himself with Great Britain as well. British to him was a collective name for Scottish and non-Scottish officers in the British army. It for example also included an Irish officer. Together, this mixed group was referred to as British. For official purposes, they were all grouped together under the heading 'British'. For example, Lee was the cashier of the British section of the prison camp in Karlsruhe, and before leaving he had to give account to the highest-ranking British officer. There was no separate cashier for Scottish officers.[183]

The English and Scottish officers in the camp seemed to get along pretty well. Lee mentioned no conflicts between the two groups, and he indeed socialized with officers of other backgrounds too. Not the only Scot in the camp, no particular reference to socializing with these officers with a Scottish background was made.[184] Indeed, the only really close friends Lee mentioned in his book were non-Scots. For example, after the armistice Lee decided to spend some time in Berlin with a friend, Captain Tim Sugrue, with whom he had made several excursions before. Nowhere in the book anything about the background of this Captain Sugrue was mentioned, but it is safe to assume he was not Scottish, as Lee referred to the two of them as 'two British Gefangenen' and not 'two Scottish Gefangenen'.[185] That the English officers were not regarded as foreigners was also visible from the description of a Russian dentist, who was referred to as 'the only foreign prisoner in the camp'.[186]

Indeed, there was a very clear feeling of a common cause. For example, Lee described his grief over the death of two English pilots, who crashed near the prison camp. He secured his place in the funeral party by bribing one of his fellow officers. But although Lee described his great sadness about seeing one of his own planes brought down and the importance of paying respect to his comrades-in-arms, it remains unclear whether it was for this reason or for the possibility of leaving the walls of the prison behind for a few hours (only the second time in seven months) that Lee insisted on attending the funeral.[187]

Outsiders often labeled him as English, as did for example German children living near the camp. This did not disturb Lee. Indeed, when asked by a young woman whether he

[181] Lee, *A Captive at Carlsruhe*, 161.
[182] Ibidem, 118.
[183] Ibidem, 123, 140.
[184] Ibidem, 113.
[185] Ibidem, 203-217.
[186] Ibidem, 143.
[187] Ibidem, 101.

and a fellow prisoner were English officers', they answered affirming. English and British seemed to go hand in hand.[188]

In his poetry, Lee's longing for home was much more apparent. Already in the first poem, 'The half-hour's furlough' the protagonist was on leave in his dreams, visiting his Scottish hometown, which was remembered with tenderness. Although the city was not mentioned by name, it was clear that the poem was about Dundee, as the geography and landmarks matched Dundee's, as did the presence of his family.[189] In 'Nocturnal' the protagonist dreamt of good old Scotland, giving 'a hell o' a lot' to see the Scottish hills, to embrace a Scottish girl and to drink a Scottish pint again.[190] Other poems, such as 'The home-coming' and 'When we remembered', were also about home, although these poems were more general and could have been set anywhere in Great Britain.[191]

Some of the poems contained images that were distinctively Scottish. 'Freindum Dhu' for example was a short poem dedicated to the dark tartan of the Black Watch, the Highland regiment Lee served in. Describing the color of their kilt, Lee related how the dark tartan now also included, next to blue and green threads, a red thread, from all the blood they had shed.[192] 'The drum' played with the imagery of the music bands accompanying the Scottish Highland regiments, the pipe bands. In this poem Lee described how the drums, fifes and pipes called the soldiers to leave home and wives and go to war.[193] The same pipes too announced the beginning and end of the military training every day in 'The billet'.[194] 'I canna see the sergeant' referred to a marching song of the 4th Battalion of the Black Watch (Lee's own battalion), about a dead Black Watch officer, which in dark days assumed a special meaning to the soldiers. With the Gaelic melody and Scots lyrics, it was typically Scottish.[195] Music too played an important role in 'The mouth-organ'. Lee related how the hearts of the Black Watch men were touched when a private played Scottish tunes such as 'The Banks o' Bonnie Doon', 'Annie Laurie' or the regimental march, 'Highland laddie', and how these songs gave them the energy to accomplish important victories or carry on when they were tired.[196]

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[188] Lee, *A Captive at Carlsruhe*, 216.
[189] Joseph Lee, *Ballads of Battle* (New York, 1916) https://archive.org/details/balladsbattle00leegoog (20-08-2014) 1-4.
[190] Lee, *Ballads of Battle*, 60.
[191] Ibidem, 40-45.
[192] Ibidem, 11.
[193] Ibidem, 33-34.
[194] Ibidem, 60-62.
[195] Ibidem, 38-39.
[196] Ibidem, 75-76.

In some other poems, a broader view was displayed. In ‘Soldier, soldier’ Lee referred for example to Britain’s ancient martial glory, not Scotland’s ancient glory, as many other authors did.[197] The soldier in ‘Tommy and Fritz’ repaid a singing German soldier with ‘God save the King’ instead of a Scottish tune.[198] In ‘When we remembered’ the protagonist asked rhetorical questions about things soldiers remembered when they were in the trenches. This included Scottish scenes, such as the glens and the bens, but also English sights, such as the white cliffs and the Channel.[199]

In ‘When the Armada sailed from Spain’ Lee went back into history, to the failed attack of the Spanish Armada on Great Britain (1588) and the Battle of Waterloo (1815). National heroes as Sir Francis Brake and the Duke of Wellington were celebrated. According to Lee, Britain now put its faith in the current generation and ‘what was then, will be again’.[200] Waterloo was also remembered in ‘1815-1915: one hundred years ago to-day’, a poem in which Lee drew comparisons between the historical battle and today’s fight. The protagonist’s grandfather fought in this war, and throughout the poem Lee compared his fight with his grandfather’s fight, whose example he hoped to follow.[201]

In his second volume, Lee too wrote about Great Britain or England more regularly. In ‘Shakespeare’s tercentenary’ for example the protagonist was reminded of England by reading Shakespeare, and Shakespeare’s dead were compared to today’s dead, both giving their life so that England might live: a small sacrifice indeed.[202] In ‘Back to London’ a soldier on leave described his journey home, relating how he was moved to tears upon seeing England again.[203] In ‘Sick parade’ England (and not Scotland) was equaled with home and beauty and in ‘The things I’ve seen’ the protagonist related how his battalion went over the top to an almost certain death singing and cheering for Britain (and again, not Scotland).[204] In ‘Our British dead’ it were British soldiers speaking to their living comrades and the nation they fell for, wishing England well, asking England not to forget them, so that their sacrifice were not in vain.[205]

[197] Lee, *Ballads of Battle*, 35.
[198] Ibidem, 78-80.
[199] Ibidem, 40-42.
[200] Ibidem, 57.
[201] Ibidem, 97-99.
[202] Joseph Lee, *Work-A-Day Warriors* (New York, 1918) via https://archive.org/details/workadaywarriors00leejiala (20-08-2014) 3-6.
[203] Lee, *Work-A-Day Warriors*, 22.
[204] Ibidem, 36, 59-62.
[205] Ibidem, 108-109.

As this suggests, in *Work-A-Day Warriors* Lee did not only write from a Scottish perfective. The view was indeed more imperial. 'War' was about a Canadian corporal's reflections on the war, 'Saint Patrick's Day in the mornin'' was about the St Patrick's Day's of an Irish corporal and 'The Australian' celebrated the undisciplined but magnificently fighting Australian soldiers.[206] 'Tik Johnny'[207] was about the Indian soldiers, who fought for the King along with the British soldiers. 'Marcelle' was dedicated to the waitress of a French cafe, although this poem did have a Scottish touch too, as it ended with the line 'Thy Scottish soldiers wish thee well!', whereby the Scottish soldiers identified themselves as Scottish for only the second time this volume.[208] Indeed, in this volume Scotland was not so vividly present anymore. The only further reference to Scotland was the 'Highland hand or leg' in 'The steel helmet', referring to the hands and legs of the Scottish soldiers.[209]

Lee also devoted a number of poems in *Work-A-Day Warriors* to the home front, and specifically the women. Both 'The Haggis' and 'The song of the sock' celebrated the comforts sent to the front by Scottish women.[210] But the only distinctively Scottish poem in this volume was 'The Haggis', which celebrated Scotland's most famous dish, haggis. Writing in the Scottish dialect, Lee compared the extensive French menu with the simple Scottish, expressing this preference for the latter, which was referred to as 'Scotland's glory'. The dish brought back memories of home, making him dream of Scotland. Throughout this poem Lee described the delight of the traditional Scottish haggis meal: smelling the haggis being prepared, the haggis being piped onto the table, the haggis being addressed by a senior officer, and finally the haggis being eaten.[211]

From his writings a mixed image of Lee emerges. On the one hand, Lee was distinctively Scottish. He felt Scottish, got emotional when reading Scottish novels and cooked Scottish food. Home for him too was tied up with Scotland, with Dundee and with his family. When writing about himself in his account of his captivity, he always referred to himself as a Scotsman. Only in the company of non-Scots, he became British. On the other hand, Lee also identified himself with Great Britain. Fighting in the British army, he extensively wrote about British military history, writing quite a few poems about the subject in each volume of poetry, priding in both Scotland's and Britain's military past. When others identified him as British, or even as English, he did not mind. British officers were regarded

[206] Lee, *Work-A-Day Warriors*, 27-32, 38-40, 100.
[207] Ibidem, 105-106.
[208] Ibidem, 90.
[209] Ibidem, 96.
[210] Ibidem, 80.
[211] Ibidem, 65-70, 80.

as more than just allies, they were indeed ‘his own’. He for example felt sadness when non-Scots died for Britain in battle.

Especially later on, his identification with Great Britain seemed to grow, as his last volume of poetry was less Scotland-oriented than his first: Scotland was mentioned fewer times, Great Britain was mentioned more often. His poems increasingly covered the entire imperial spectrum, with poems about Canadians, Indians and Australians as well. This imperial view was not as distinct before, when more poems were about his own regiment and home. Although some references to Scotland could still be found later on, his poems – with the exception of ‘The Haggis’ – were no longer distinctively Scottish. Instead they could have been written by any British non-commissioned officer. Only his account of his captivity in Germany shows how much he still felt Scottish.

In Lee’s case, fighting for Great Britain seemed to have broadened his view. Although he continued to identify with Scotland, his outlook became more and more imperial in the course of the war. In this regard Lee is an excellent example of what warfare can do with national identification in wartime. During the First World War fighting for Great Britain and contact with people from all over the British Empire seemed to have shifted his focus from Scotland to Great Britain, without completely doing away with his Scottish identity. Instead, he developed a second identity, that of Brit. In this sense, Lee was probably not unique. One of many Scots confronted with the imperial reality of fighting to save the British Empire from ‘the Huns’, Lee identified much more with Great Britain at the end of the war, changing his outlook from Scottish to imperial.

3.3. Ewart Alan Mackintosh

Ewart Alan Mackintosh (Brighton, 1893-1917) was born in England to a Scottish father and an English mother. His father’s family came from Inverness-shire and Ross-shire, and Mackintosh cherished his Scottish heritage, learning to speak Gaelic and playing the pipes in his spare time. He also traveled to Scotland a number of times with his father as well as with friends from university. When war broke out in the summer of 1914, Mackintosh was studying classics at Oxford University. A member of the Officers’ Training Corps of Oxford University, Mackintosh tried to enlist immediately, but was rejected on account of his poor eyesight. When reapplying in December 1914, he was accepted and given a commission as a 2nd lieutenant in the 5th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders. He left for the front in July 1915 and won the Military Cross for bravery in May 1916 near Arras for his role during a trench raid.

Wounded and gassed in August 1916, Mackintosh was sent home to recover. For the next eight months, Mackintosh trained new cadets near Cambridge. He was back with the Seaforth Highlanders in October 1917 and was killed in action the next month during the Battle of Cambrai, serving with the 4th Seaforth Highlanders.[212]

Mackintosh's literary legacy was limited to two volumes of poetry. *A Highland Regiment and Other Poems* was published in 1917. Posthumously, in 1918 *War, The Liberator, and Other Poems* was published.

Mackintosh's mixed upbringing was visible in this poetry. In 'Anns an cleann'san san robh mi og' the protagonist remembered the happy summer moments spent in the Scottish glens, whereas 'From a war station' was dedicated to an Oxford friend. 'Oxford from the trenches' too was about his previous life in Oxford, as is 'Matri Almae'.[213] Of his earlier poems 'The kingdom of the Downs' celebrated a roadstead in southern England, close to Mackintosh's hometown Brighton.[214] 'Mallaig bay' on the other hand was about the Scottish Highland village Mallaig. In this poem, written in Sussex in 1912, Mackintosh described how he was tired of southern England, and how much he longed for Scotland, and the village of Mallaig in particular.[215] The play 'Three songs from the remembered Gods' was set in mythical Scotland.[216]

'Cha till MacCruimein' portrayed the departure of the 4th Camerons, a fellow Highland regiment, to the front. Showing the good feelings existing between the different Highland regiments, the Cameron Highlanders were referred to by Mackintosh as 'my friends'. Their departure was a joyous occasion, and the soldiers were off singing and laughing, dreaming about honor and glory. The only one present who was not cheerful seemed to be the narrator, the only one who heard a distinctive Scottish lament, announcing death and mourning. Mackintosh made an explicit connection with previous wars, as following the pipes and drums were not just the 4th Camerons, but also ancient ghosts of

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[212] Author unknown, http://www.scuttlebuttsmallchow.com/listscot.html (31-10-2014); Ewart Alan Mackintosh, *War, The Liberator, and Other Poems* (London and New York, 1918) via https://archive.org/details/02079455.99423.emory.edu (01-06-2014) 3-6.

[213] Ewart Alan Mackintosh, *A Highland Regiment and Other Poems* (London and New York, 1917) via https://archive.org/details/highlandregiment00mack (01-06-2014) 13-15, 24, 35-36.

[214] Mackintosh, *In a Highland Regiment*, 55-56.

[215] Ibidem, 59.

[216] Ibidem, 82-85.

soldiers who had died before them as well as a MacCrimmon piper, one of the then extinct line of the hereditary pipers of Clan MacLeod of Skye, Inverness-shire, the county the regiment was recruited.[217]

'The undying race' celebrated Gaelic warriors. The First World War was portrayed as one of many wars against the 'Saxon hordes'. After a long period of peace, the Gaels took up their rusty swords again, as 'Fingal's peers'. Referring to the mythical hunter-warrior of James Macpherson's Ossian cycle, Mackintosh deliberately played with popular Highland images. The friendship with the French Breton was visible throughout the poem. Speakers of a related Celtic language, there existed a special bond between Scots and Bretons. Gaelic warriors of both races were portrayed as fighting together against an ancient foe, the Germanic Saxons.[218]

In 'The German and the Gael' Mackintosh drew a comparison between the German and the Highland soldiers. The Gaelic soldiers went out without pomp and show, not knowing what their fate would be. Not blinded by the lies of their officers and generals, they went forward knowing that they might not survive the battle. Again invoking Scotland's military tradition, Mackintosh described how they went out not for glory, booty or conquest, but to follow their forefather's footsteps. Remembering the ancient battles, they went out without fear, resembling their fathers and grandfathers.[219]

The imaginary in 'Beaumont-Hamel' too was thoroughly Scottish. Addressing his dead comrades, the protagonist wondered whether they dreamt of walking across the heather and feeling the northern weather. Then, turning to the present time, he portrayed a shepherd coming across their kilted bodies. The author however, in contrast to the shepherd, did not see their bodies. Instead, he heard their laughter and singing coming from the battle lines, like a dying *pibroch* or bagpipe lament. Not really dead, they were swinging forever forward, these warriors of Scotland.[220]

'Three battles' was dedicated to the 51st Highland Division. 'High Wood' forced upon the reader an emotional image of a broken division: broken was the valor of the north, broken were the sons of the heather, and broken was the pride of the Gaels. In 'Beaumont-Hamel' Mackintosh described how the pride of the north would rise again, with the soldiers taking vengeance for High Wood on behalf of their dead comrades, who were watching over them. 'Arras', the final poem of 'Three battles' described how Mackintosh, wounded and evacuated

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[217] Mackintosh, *In a Highland Regiment*, 16-17.
[218] Ibidem, 27-28.
[219] Mackintosh, *War, the Liberator*, 18-19.
[220] Ibidem, 20-22.

home, regretted not being able to take part in battle, not because it was such a splendid victory, but because his friends died and he was not there to do his bit and die among them.[221]

The three short stories included in *War, the Liberator* reveal interesting dynamics of identity formation in a Highland regiment as well. It shows for example that you could be Highlander by adoption. One of the sergeants in the Seaforth Highlanders was of English origin, and he was referred to as 'an English Highlander'. 'English' and 'Highlander' apparently were not as excluding as one might think. Despite his English background, the sergeant was considered a Highlander. His English identity was still recognized, but he too became a Highlander on joining the Seaforths.[222]

Identity was important on other occasions too. The Brigadier-General, the officer commanding his brigade, was noted to be a Highlander himself. Not merely a Scot, but a Highlander too. Before a raid, he addressed the Seaforths. He did not only appeal to their regimental honor, but also to their national identity:

> 'You're going to help make the name of the regiment, and the fame of the North, to-night, men. I've heard that in Flanders yesterday the Bosche came up against Scotsmen again, and got the worst of it. Now, you'll show 'em to-day that Scotsmen can give them the worst of it here, too. Scotland for ever.'[223]

Not Great Britain, but Scotland indeed.

As is clear from this overview, despite never having lived in Scotland Mackintosh wholly identified with his father's country. Already curious about his Highland legacy before the war, serving in a Highland regiment and being surrounded by Highland symbols on a daily basis stimulated Mackintosh's Scottishness more than ever before. Suddenly we find the same poet who before the war was merely writing love poetry writing about Scotland's military identity. Mackintosh indeed felt Scottish first and foremost, identifying strongly with the Highlands. Although he wrote a number of poems about England too, a similar love for England was never visible in any of the poems. Great Britain was not mentioned once. An uninformed reader might even suspect that Scotland was at war, and not Great Britain. There is indeed nothing in this poetry to suggest that Mackintosh felt British, only Scottish.

Comparing the experience of Joseph Lee and Ewart Alan Mackintosh, the First World War had a different impact on Mackintosh. Indeed, it may very well be argued that their experiences during the war drove them in opposite directions. Whereas Lee became closer to

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[221] Mackintosh, *War, the Liberator*, 25.
[222] Ibidem, 121.
[223] Ibidem, 127.

Great Britain, for Mackintosh his experiences during the war served to enhance his Scottish identity, at the expense of the British identity. In the course of the war, Mackintosh, who already identified with Scotland before joining the army, attached ever more importance to his Scottish heritage. Serving in a Highland regiment during the war seemed to have been instrumental in bringing about this change.

3.4. Charles Murray

Charles Murray (1864-1941) wrote in the Doric Scottish dialect, that is spoken in northeastern Scotland. Born and bred in Alford (Aberdeenshire) Murray spent most of his adult life in South Africa. The son of a carpenter, Murray was of humble origins and had a practical rather than an academic training. A civil engineer, Murray served in the army both during the Second Boer War and the First World War. Nearly fifty years old when the First World War broke out, Murray was too old for active service. He did however serve with the Pretoria Guard in South Africa. When Murray retired in 1924 he returned to his native Scotland, settling again in Aberdeenshire. He died there in 1941.[224]

Murray published his first volume of poetry, *A Handful of Heather*, in 1893, but it failed to make much impression. His second volume, *Hamewith* (1900) was more successful, going through five editions. His war poetry was published in *The Sough o' War* (1917). Fiercely patriotic, Murray was known for his use of old-fashioned imagery and his poetry mainly focused on the chivalry in warfare. His final volume of poetry, *In the Country Places*, was published in 1920. Posthumously *Last Poems* was published in 1969.

Charles Murray was a Scot first and foremost. This becomes apparent as soon as you open *The Sough o' War*. It was dedicated to 'a young sapper somewhere in France and to all in whatever art upholding the fair name and honour of Scotland'. *Scotland* yes, not Great Britain. This is characteristic for a volume of poetry completely dedicated to Scotland. Great

[224] Colin Milton, 'A Sough o'War: The Great War in the Poetry of North East Scotland' (date unknown) via http://www.abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone/kist/search/display.php?cmil01.dat (28-11-2014); Colin Milton, 'From Charles Murray to Hugh MacDiarmid: Vernacular Revival and Scottish Renaissance', in: David Hewitt and Michael Spiller (eds.), *Literature of the North* (Aberdeen, 1983) 82-108: 83-84.

Britain was not mentioned even once. Instead it was Scotland and Scotland alone that was the focus of Murray's work.

More than any other author, Charles Murray was concerned with the home front. To a certain extent this may have been a result of his lack of active service, as Murray only served in the home defense forces during the First World War and not at any of the actual war fronts. Therefore, Murray wrote comparatively little about the actual war, resulting in old-fashioned poetry that focused on Scotland's martial tradition, honor and duty.

The untitled opening poem of *The Sough o' War* invoked images of the home front, showing how the entire society was involved in the war. Although women and elderly men stayed at home, their thoughts were with the soldiers, with the elderly men sincerely wishing they could join the younger men in facing the enemy. That this was a Scottish home front only became apparent in the last two sentences, as references to anything specifically Scottish were lacking before, but the use of the Doric Scottish dialect, spoken in northeastern Scotland, gave away a big clue.[225]

The Doric dialect was specific to Murray's poetry. Unlike the other authors discussed in this chapter, Murray wrote his poetry in his native dialect, adding an extra Scottish touch. The title poem, 'A sought o' war', again portrayed a peaceful rural society that was suddenly confronted with warfare. Although not asking for war or provoking it, the simple villagers took up the challenge both because of 'credit o' our honest name' and for the cause of freedom. Indeed, although blood had been shed on distant battlefields before (a reference to Scotland's martial tradition), never before was the cry to war so urgent. And therefore gallant and study men of every age came from all corners of Scotland, from 'the strath an' glen', 'brochs an' toons' and 'the bucht and' hill', to 'answer Scotland's cry' showing the world that 'Auld Scotland counted for something still'.[226]

In 'Wha bares a blade for Scotland' (1915) the emphasis on Scotland was even stronger. In this poem Murray addressed the young Scots, telling them that Scotland (not Great Britain!) needed them, and asking them what they would do for Scotland in return for all that Scotland had done for them. In this poem, Murray reverted back to tradition and to history, mentioning the age old battle cries, the patterns of the plaid (tartan) and the sacrifices of the Covenanters, an important seventeenth century Scottish Presbyterian movement. Scotland ancient glory was mentioned, and Scottish heroes such as William Wallace and

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[225] Charles Murray, *The Sough o' War* (London, 1917) via https://archive.org/details/soughowar00murruoft (20-08-2014) 9-11.

[226] Murray, *The Sough o' War*, 13-14.

Robert the Bruce were described as lads who stood staunch for Scotland, asking the current generation to follow their footsteps. In this poem Murray also called on Scots overseas – such as himself - to leave their work and help out the country that nurtured them, as Scotland was in need, with her back facing the wall.[227]

The same expat Scot was also addressed in 'To the hin'most man'. In this poem Murray described how even the hearts of the Scots who had emigrated, 'still turn to the auld Scots Hame', and Scotland only needed to 'send the cry', and even the furthest away Scot would come to her defense. Throughout the poem again the imaginary was typical of rural Scotland: bens and glens were interspersed with the Highlands.[228] Indeed, Murray's poetry showed an idealized Scotland: hills, straths, bens and glens, covered with purple heather. A country inhabited by simple and honest folk, where cities did not seem to exist. In 1917, long after the peak of the Industrial Revolution, this image of Scotland was rather one-sided. To say the least.[229]

'The thraws o' fate' (1915) was written from the point of view of a Scot too old to fight. The narrator lamented that he was too old and his son was still too young, making him feel as if he missed out on everything. In this poem again Murray referred to the glory of his ancestors. This time however it was a specific Celtic past, as Murray mentioned the visible remains of Scotland's martial traditions abroad: cairns and (Celtic) crosses, that were specific to the Highland tradition.[230] In 'Lat's hear the pipes' (1916) another Highland symbol was celebrated, the bagpipes. In this poem Murray explained the consolation it could bring in gloomy days.[231]

Not in all the poems the same keenness however was displayed. 'Dockens before his peers' (1916) portrayed a reluctant farmer, who would rather not go off to fight, as he had his job back home and he could not be missed. Instead of asking him to fight or take his personnel in his place, he suggested the recruitment officer to look in other places, as in his opinion there were plenty of men to be found in the mines for example. 'Just show them ahin' the pipes an' tell them that it's 'War'; for gin aul' Scotland's at the bit, there's naething for 't but list'. And even though some 'mayna like it vera', he should just insist that they should come.[232]

[227] Murray, *The Sough o' War*, 15-17.
[228] Ibidem, 18.
[229] Ibidem, 13-18, 31.
[230] Ibidem, 19.
[231] Ibidem, 45.
[232] Ibidem, 37-38.

As this brief discussion of Murray's poetry suggests, Murray was a fiercely patriotic Scotsman. As patriotic in 1914 as in 1916, in this respect the war and his service with the Home Guard did not change much for him. He remained a staunch Scotsman, dedicated to Scotland. Writing in the Scots dialect about Scots and Scotland, Great Britain or England were not part of his world. In this respect Murray resembled Ewart Alan Mackintosh. Like Mackintosh, Murray did not mention Great Britain once. This was all the stranger because Murray was an expat Scot, living in South Africa. Although serving in the home defense forces, Murray's poetry was mainly concerned with the home front, and not with the armed forces. That his poetry was mainly placed in Scotland, his native country that he left many years before, was rather unexpected, but living abroad had probably made him more conscious about his Scottish identity.

3.5. Sir Ian Hamilton

Sir Ian Standish Monteith Hamilton (Corfu, Greece, 1853-1947) was the Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, commanding the British army during the Gallipoli campaign (1915). His father was the colonel of the 92nd Highlanders, his mother the daughter of an Irish viscount. Joining the army in 1873 after attending Sandhurst, before the First World War Hamilton served in India, Afghanistan, Burma, Sudan and South Africa with the 12th (East Suffolk) Regiment, the 1st Gordon Highlanders, the 9th Royal Scots, the 3rd Manchester Regiment and the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders.

During his lengthy military career, Hamilton was Military Secretary at the War Office, Chief of Staff to Lord Kitchener during the Second Boer War, Quartermaster-General to the Forces and the military attaché of the British Indian Army during the Russo-Japanese War, the General Officer Commanding Southern Command, Adjutant-General to the Forces as well as Britain's Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean. He was knighted in 1902.

During the Great War, Hamilton commanded the home forces and, from March 1915 until October 1915, the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. The failure of the Gallipoli campaign meant the end of Hamilton's military career. Even though he served as Lieutenant

of the Tower between 1918 and 1920, he was never again awarded an important military command.[233]

Although born on Corfu, Hamilton was raised in Argyll and retained a connection to Scotland throughout his life. He served in numerous Scottish regiments, married a Scottish wife and held the position of Scottish president of the British Legion and Rector of the University of Edinburgh after the war. Promoting friendship between Britain and Germany, Hamilton also co-founded the Anglo-German Association in 1928, serving as its vice-president.

Throughout his life, Hamilton published numerous books. His bibliography encompassed 83 works in 8 different languages. His *Staff Officer's Scrap-book during the Russo-Japanese War* (1905-1907) covered his service as military attaché in the Far East. *Sir Ian Hamilton's Despatches from the Dardanelles, etc* was published in 1915, whereas his diary from this campaign was published in 1920. After the Great War he published a number of autobiographic works, such as *When I was a Boy* (1939) and *Listening for the Drums* (1944).

Ian Hamilton was an Empire man. During a lengthy military career, Hamilton had fought all over the British Empire, and throughout his diary he kept referring to his previous experiences, especially on the Indian Subcontinent and in South Africa.[234] The Gallipoli campaign was also mainly viewed through the imperial prism. On many different occasions Hamilton voiced his frustration with the War Office, that mainly focused on France, whereas he believed he could gain a decisive victory by knocking out the Ottoman Empire, thereby deciding the outcome of the war.[235]

Both his diary and his dispatches were written from a distant perspective. Although in his diary Hamilton wrote extensively about his feelings and emotions, nowhere this surpassed the occupational and became personal. He grieved the death of certain officers, deploring his inability to keep them safe (as was for example the case with Rupert Brooke, the young poet), he voiced his irritation with the War Office, his disappointment with the lack of progress during the campaign in general, and his pride in the attitude of the rank and file. He also described in detail his relationships with other generals and admirals and with his boss, Lord

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[233] Author unknown, http://www.firstworldwar.com/bio/hamilton.htm (25-10-2014); Trevor Royle, *In Flanders Fields: Scottish Poetry and Prose of the First World War* (Edinburgh, 1991).

[234] See for example Ian Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary Volume I* (London, 1920) via http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/19317 (13-10-2014) 78-82.

[235] See for example Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary I*, 329; Ian Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary Volume II* (London, 1920) http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/22021 (13-10-2014) 182-183, 205, 252.

Kitchener, and Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, revealing the extremely careful balance Hamilton had to keep. Constantly keeping the home front in mind, Hamilton's home front existed of Lord Kitchener, the War Office and parliament. His family was not mentioned once, and nowhere in his diary Hamilton declared to long for home – as the non-career soldiers did time and again. A professional soldier, war was his business and the army was his home. If he mentioned the home front at all however, it was Britain and not merely Scotland Hamilton was thinking about.[236]

Although Hamilton was of Scottish origin, in neither his diary nor his dispatches this was very obvious. While he praised Scottish troops on numerous occasions, there was no indication that this was done simply because they were Scottish. Instead, it can be argued that this was inspired by admiration for the military traditions of some regiments. The only Scottish formation Hamilton showed something of a soft spot for was the 5th Battalion Royal Scots, an old regiment with an exceptional record that Hamilton served in himself. Appreciating 'the special fighting traditions of 'Auld Reekie' (Edinburgh), Hamilton wired the mayor of Edinburgh on one occasion to express his admiration for the battalion.[237] When it fell below strength, Hamilton preferred breaking up new formations in order to supply the Royal Scots with drafts rather than withdrawing them from the frontline. Not limited to Scottish regiments only, Hamilton showed the same inclination when it came to non-Scottish regiments.[238]

But with the exception of this particular Royal Scots battalion, Hamilton never referred to the Scottish nature of the Scottish troops in so many words. For example, the 2nd Lovat Scouts were merely referred to as a very fine lot of men. Although he did add that the men of the 87th Field Ambulance were Highland Territorials from Aberdeen, no particular importance was attached to this fact. Similarly, when the 52nd Lowland Division was sent to Gallipoli in May 1915, Hamilton was relieved to receive new recruits, but whether they were from his native Scotland or from any other part of the world did not really matter that much. The strengthening of his troops was more important than their origin, and the Scottish nature of this reinforcement was not really significant to him.[239]

In either his diary or his dispatches Hamilton referred to his Scottish background only once. During the Gallipoli campaign his major concern was always ammunition. Making choices, on one occasion he related how he had not been able to give the 156th Brigade of the

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[236] See for example Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary I*, 339; Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary II*, 155.
[237] Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary I*, 190; Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary II*, 155.
[238] Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary II*, 155, 183.
[239] Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary II*, 172, 219, 244.

Lowland Division as many shells as he would have liked to, and therefore their success was not as impressive as that of the 29th Division. 'To think [that] my brother Scots should have had to catch hold of the hot end of the poker' however made Hamilton 'sick at heart'.[240] A Lowland brigade, made up of a number of Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) regiments and a number of Royal Scots regiments, they were Hamilton's 'brother Scots', evoking his Scottishness.[241]

The only occasion on which Scottishness may have been a plus is when it came to selecting a new Corps commander for the 9th Army Corps. Hamilton took a number of characteristics into account. Although to his regret he had to advise against appointing Lieutenant-General William Henry Ewart because of his physique, Ewart's positive characteristics included his character, but also his military lineage: he was a Cameron Highlander, with a father who served as the C.O. of the Gordon Highlanders, not accidentally two regiments Hamilton also had connections with.[242]

If the 9th Army Corps had mainly consisted of Scottish or even Highland troops, the choice for a Scottish commander would have been very obvious. This however was not the case. During the Gallipoli campaign, the 9th Army Corps consisted of 6 divisions: the 10th (Irish) Division, the 11th (Northern) Division, the 13th (Western) Division, the 53rd (Welsh) Division, the 54th (East Anglian) Division and the 2nd Mounted Division. Most of the regiments were Irish, Welsh and English. Only in September the first Scottish troops were attached to the 2nd Mounted Division. The Scottish Horse Brigade arrived in early September, and the Highland Mounted Brigade arrived at the end of September. In October the Lowland Mounted Brigade followed. Battalions of neither the Cameron nor the Gordon Highlanders were ever part of the 9th Army Corps. It can only be concluded therefore that Ewart's connection with the Cameron and Gordon Highlanders was important in Hamilton's eyes because he himself had also served in these two Highland regiments, and not because it said something about Ewart's Scottishness.[243]

If not Scots, what soldiers did have a special place in Sir Ian Hamilton's heart? Three should be mentioned specifically: Indian troops, ANZACs and especially the territorial battalions of East Lancashire. The keen officers and soldiers of the East Lancashire Division were praised on more than one occasion. When writing about them, Hamilton referred to them as 'my Manchester friends' and 'the most beautiful of the Divisions of Northern England'.

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[240] Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary II*, 9.
[241] 'The 52nd (Lowland) Division'.
[242] Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary I*, 306-307.
[243] Author unknown, http://www.royalmunsterfusiliers.org/k4ixc.htm (25-10-2014)

Although no love was lost between Ian Hamilton and the territorial regiments (indeed, the Southern English territorial regiments for example he called backward and second-class, and were in his eyes only good for non-fighting tasks, allowing the regulars to concentrate on the fighting, without having to think of other duties), he had a soft spot for the East Lancashire division, most likely because Hamilton served with the 1st Manchester Regiment in South Africa. Indeed, he admitted that the fine Lancashire men reminded him of his 'old comrades of Elandslaagte and Caesar's Camp'. Valuing the East Lancashire Territorials even higher than regular troops, especially the 6th Battalion impressed him: in Hamilton's eyes they would 'serve very well as picked specimens of our race not so much in height or physique, but in the impression they gave of purity of race and distinction. Here are the best the old country can produce the hope of the progress of the British ideal in the world'. Indeed, they had the airs of regulars, and outshone them physically, coming from the mines and the mills.[244]

Hamilton also wrote with great sympathy about the ANZAC troops, who too were referred to as old friends, as Hamilton had inspected them not long before the war. In his diary Hamilton described how happy he was to see them again, and how much he admired their physique, their bravery, their keenness and the fire in their hearts. He related with pride how on the day of a suspected Turkish attack, no one reported sick, and no one would leave the line, for fear of missing the battle. Similarly, Hamilton proudly told the reader that although they were supposed to play second fiddle during an attack at another front, the 'defensive of the Australians and New Zealanders has always tended to take on the character of an attack'.[245]

The Indian troops also had a special place in Hamilton's heart. Having served in India for many years, Hamilton spoke Hindi fluently and valued Indian troops for their specific skills. The Sikhs and Gurkhas were for example referred to as 'those splendid knights-errant of India'. Of all his troops, the Indian regiments were most suitable for the Gallipoli campaign, because of their familiarity with the climate and ground, judged Hamilton. Indeed, they 'make his mouth water' and on more than one occasion Hamilton mentioned that one Indian soldier at Gallipoli was worth at least two white soldiers, showing his immense respect for them.[246]

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[244] Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary I*, 58-59, 81, 199, 206-207, 337; Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary II*, 25.
[245] Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary I*, 60-61; Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary II*, 30; Ian Hamilton, *Sir Ian Hamilton's Despatches from the Dardanelles* (London, 1915) via https://archive.org/details/sirianhamiltonsd00hami (10-12-2014) 85.
[246] Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary I*, 73-74; Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary II*, 51, 76.

As his appreciation for non-Scottish troops shows, Hamilton was more than a Scottish general. Feeling responsible for all rank and file, Hamilton mentioned how the colonial troops were 'entrusted to us by the Commonwealth and Dominion'.[247] For example, when the content of a slamming letter by K.A. Murdoch to the Prime Minister of Australia reached Gallipoli, Hamilton was furious, as both his good name as well as the honor of the British officers and the good name of the British rank and file were at stake.[248] Referring to himself as Scottish only once, on many more occasions he referred to himself as British, showing his appreciation for the British soldier, for example praising his 'invincible spirit'.[249]

A career soldier in the service of Great Britain, Ian Hamilton's diary and dispatches were not distinctively Scottish. Indeed, they could have been written by any general, showing how much the military influenced the views of Britain's military personnel. Hamilton's outlook was not Scottish, but truly imperial. Having fought all over the globe, he felt truly British. Although he did not do away with his Scottish identity completely, this Scottish background was hardly noticeable in his writings. If anything, Hamilton identified with the regiments he fought in, most strongly the East Lancashire and the Highland regiments. His appreciation for battalions as the 5th Royal Scots was also tied to an occupational admiration for regiments with old traditions, and not so much with the fact that they were Scottish. Indeed, his praise for the Indian and ANZAC troops was far greater than his praise for the Scottish formations. An experienced soldier, the First World War did not have a major influence on Ian Hamilton's sense of identity. Having served Britain for over forty years already, Hamilton continued to feel mainly British throughout the war.

3.6. Conclusion

Five Scots, five different identities. The Scots discussed in this chapter came from all walks of life: from volunteers in the home defense forces and privates with only practical training to university educated subalterns and high-ranking generals. They truly covered the entire spectrum of functions in which Scots served in the British army during the First World War. In some ways they were exceptional. Four out of five spent the majority of their lives outside Scotland: Charles Murray in South Africa, Charles Hamilton Sorley and Ewart Alan Mackintosh in England and Sir Ian Hamilton in army service throughout the British Empire.

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[247] Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary II*, 153.
[248] Ibidem, 258-259.
[249] See for example Ibidem, 183, 276.

Indeed, Mackintosh and Hamilton were not even born in Scotland, although Hamilton spent at least his childhood in Scotland. Mackintosh's only link with the Highlands was his father's side of the family.

The feeling of Scottishness was perhaps the strongest in Murray, the only of the five to write in the Scottish dialect, in his case the Doric Scottish of Aberdeenshire. In his poetry Great Britain was not mentioned once. This applied also to Mackintosh and Sorley. Indeed, Mackintosh's identification with Scotland was almost as strong as Murray's. In neither of the two the love for Scotland was however coupled by a dislike for England, as was so visible in the writings of Scotland's most famous war poet. Sorley's disdain for Great Britain was really exceptional. Fueled by long residence in Germany, Sorley wrote with more love about Germany than Great Britain. But although he did not care much for Britain outside of Wiltshire and did not really care about the outcome of the war, Sorley felt clearly Scottish, explicitly stating that he was Scottish and not English at times.

Mackintosh and Sorley were by no means unique. The diary of Henry Dundas, that could not be examined in greater detail because of lack of space, was very much in line with their ideas. The Scotland-born, university-educated Dundas too was more fond of Scotland than Great Britain, describing for example love of Scotland as the dominant note of his life.[250]

Spending long periods of time outside of Great Britain did not turn all Scots into pro-German haters of everything British though, as testified the case of Joseph Lee, who spent over a year in German POW camps. Of all five, Lee's identity was probably most mixed. On the one hand Lee was distinctively Scottish, but on the other hand he did feel a clear connection to Great Britain as well. This association seemed to grow in the course of the war too, as the second of his volumes of poetry was more imperial British in outlook than his first.

The only of the five Scots discussed who was more British than Scottish was Ian Hamilton, the general who spent his entire life defending the British Empire. A career soldier and an imperial servant, it is no surprise that he felt closely connected to Great Britain. In his writings there was little that revealed he still felt Scottish, apart from one reference to his 'brother Scots'. Instead, his outlook at the start of the war was imperial, and his outlook remained imperial. His praise was for non-Scottish troops too. Indeed, he seemed to feel more closely connected to the regiments he served in himself than Scottish regiments in general. In this respect, Hamilton was the most British of them all.

[250] Dundas, *Scots Guards,* 17-18.

A war of this magnitude was bound to influence the outlook of the soldiers fighting it. As discussed in this chapter, this mainly seemed to be the case for those with a civilian background. The world of a professional soldier as Ian Hamilton did not change overnight, he continued to do the same job he had been doing since the 1870s: fighting in exotic corners of the world on behalf of Great Britain. It was different for officers as Sorley or Mackintosh, who came to the front straight from university after a limited period of training. The war literally turned their worlds upside down, and it is not surprisingly that their thoughts and interests developed before the war – for example dislike of Britain in the case of Sorley, his Scottish heritage in the case of Mackintosh – radicalized during the war.

What is important to note is that their identities did not all develop in the same direction. For example, Lee's outlook became more imperial in the course of the war, whereas Mackintosh started to attach more and more importance to his Scottish heritage and identity. Sorley, while continuing to pride himself on his Scottish heritage, rejected Great Britain with ever greater force. As this shows, there is not one particular development visible with regard to identity formation, but multiple. This to some extent also explains why the First World War did not do the same for Scotland as it did for Australia. A tragedy as Loos for example was interpreted in different ways by different people.

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis I have identified many different levels of identification. On the one hand soldiers identified with their city/county, Scotland and the British Empire, and on the other hand they also identified with their battalion, regiment, brigade and division. Which of these identities was primary differed from person to person. Although the Scottish identity was important for almost all soldiers and officers, it was rarely their only identity. For example, even these soldiers and officers who strongly identified with Scotland often took pride in the British Empire and portrayed themselves as fighting for civilization, for freedom, liberty and democracy, for King and Country and for the Empire. Indeed, only rarely one of these identities was completely missing. The case of Charles Hamilton Sorley, who disliked Great Britain with passion, was really unique, although others might not have cared much for Britain either, as testified the cases of Charles Murray and Ewart Alan Mackintosh. Someone like Joseph Lee, who felt distinctively Scottish, but also identified himself with Great Britain – especially in the course of the war – was probably more characteristic for the ordinary Scot serving in the British army in this period than the extremes of either Sorley or Mackintosh.

In a limited amount of cases men identified stronger with Great Britain than Scotland, but this seemed to be mainly the case for professional soldiers like Ian Hamilton or Douglas Haig, who had devoted their lives to imperial service, and Scots serving in non-Scottish units, such as John Edward Tennant (RAF). This was not uncommon in Scottish units either however, as showed a number of K.O.S.B. histories that focused more on Britain, leaving aside Scotland most of the time. In no case however Scotland was completely left out. Even these who identified themselves mostly with Britain still felt Scottish to some extent.

Each army unit too had its own identity. This was true for battalions as much as regiments, brigades and divisions. These identifications of course were specific to the First World War period, as so many Scots joined the army. Bonds were particularly strong between sister battalions. Soldiers might identify with a brigade or a division as well, but this required undergoing some fighting together. A divisional *espirit de corps* was not present from the start, it needed to grow over time. This was different for battalions from the same regiment. Even if they had never served together, when meeting a sister battalion there was an instant recognition and friendliness that was not merely that of one brother Scot meeting another. It went beyond that: they may never have met each other before and may never meet each other again afterwards, and yet they were the best of friends for often a very short period of time, showing how strong identification with a particular regiment could be. It was indeed a special

connection that was never lost: whether temporarily posted to another regiment, promoted or on leave, the regiment maintained a special place in any former servant's heart. And the other way around too, former members of the regiment promoted to a higher command would be served with special devotion. The importance of their own unit was also very clearly revealed through examining the feelings of soldiers and officers temporarily posted to other units as well as their reactions to amalgamation and breaking up of brigades/divisions. They resented this, almost without exception. This focus on military identity was really specific to the First World War situation.

How close friendships between Scots and non-Scots could be was clearly visible from the example of the 9th (Scottish) Division, in which the men did not at all like to part with the South African Brigade, despite the fact that it was replaced by a Scottish battalion. But although Scots fighting closely together with non-Scots formed friendships with them as well, it was not as natural as between fellow Scots – with the possible exception of the French Bretons. Although Lowland regiments occasionally grumbled about the Highland regiments there is little proof that this really influenced relations between Highland and Lowland regiments. Indeed, strong friendships existed between Highland and Lowland regiments as well as between different Highland and different Lowland regiments. Socializing between all was common, and they played each other in football and rugby too. This was not at all limited to Scots serving in the same division or brigade, as testified the many examples of chapter 2. The friendly rivalry between Scottish regiments was nothing compared to the outright disdain they sometimes felt for some other non-Scottish battalions. This same disdain was never expressed for fellow Scots.

Indeed, without exception Scots felt closely related to fellow Scots. This was the case both for the rank and file as well as the commanding officers. Scottish generals preferred Scottish troops and Scottish troops favored Scottish generals. Although they valued the experience and skills of some English generals and appreciated the fondness for Scotland of others, their love for Scottish generals was more personal. And Scots of all ranks were proud of Scottish formations – from General Douglas Haig to the humblest private.

Particularly Scottish elements, such as the Highland dress and the bagpipes were valued by all army Scots, whether in Lowland or in Highland regiments. The importance attached to it was that great that Lowland officers invested their own money into bagpipes, and Highland soldiers only very reluctantly and with many complaints took off their kilts – and only for strategic purposes. The Scots took particular pride in the interest they aroused not only among their fellow soldiers, but also among the local civilian population, enhancing their

national identity. As the example of Ewart Alan Mackintosh shows, serving in a Scottish regiment, wearing Scottish clothing and following the Scottish bagpipes during the long marches might actually have stimulated a feeling of Scottishness among the troops. The Scottish soldiers indeed took immense pride in the Highland symbols that served to distinguish them from non-Scots.

The war experience however seemed to have different influence on different people. Not all soldiers surviving the war came out feeling more Scottish than before. A professional soldier like Ian Hamilton was not changed much by his experiences, because he continued to do what he had been doing his entire life: serving Great Britain through warfare. It was however a different case for those with civilian backgrounds. During his training as well as his time at the front Charles Hamilton Sorley continued to reject his British identity with ever greater passion, persisting in his pro-German stand (developed when studying abroad) until his death in action. His case however was rather unique. Ewart Alan Mackintosh and Joseph Lee seemed to represent two more regular sides of the coin. On the one hand there were individuals who, like Mackintosh, became more than ever aware of their Scottish background and who felt closely related to Scotland, to the extent that Great Britain meant little or nothing to them. On the other hand there were also individuals such as Joseph Lee, who although continuing to feel Scottish, developed a more imperial British view in the course of the war. In this respect, experiences varied, and Scotland was no Australia.

In this thesis I showed how complicated and multilayered the identities of Scots serving in the British army during the First World War could be, and how war experiences could drive them in opposite directions. I also showed that there was no direct link between identities in the past and identities today. Although many Scots strongly identified with Scotland during the First World War period, most of them felt British too and they took pride in Britain's achievements. Whatever is the case today, this was the case in the early twentieth century. Arguing that what is true today was also the case in 1914 or 1918 is plainly ahistoric, as this thesis illustrates.

This thesis mainly focused on Scots serving in Scottish formations, in which the identification of soldiers and officers with Scotland was arguably the strongest. Further research into this topic however might include more sources written by Scots in non-Scottish units, as the example of John Edward Tennant showed that their identities might combine somewhat differently than those of Scots in Scottish regiments/divisions. It might also be interesting to look at more sources written by privates, as their world might look different than the world of the NCO's and officers who have written most of my sources.

Unlike the ANZAC case and Gallipoli, the Battle of Loos or the Second Battle of Gaza, tragedies for Scotland as much as Gallipoli was for Australia and New Zealand, did not mark the beginning of Scotland as a separate nation. Neither did Scottish cultural nationalism evolve into political nationalism, as was the case in Ireland during the Great War. A separate Scottish cultural identity had been existing for a long time before the First World War, but talk about devolution or even independence was still some time in the future. In this sense, the war experience was not as important in defining the Scottish national identity as was the case in some other parts of the British Empire. It would therefore also be interesting to look further into the other nations within the British Empire and their experiences during the First World War. Was the Welsh version of the First World War comparable to the Scottish, for example? Did Canada and South Africa relate to the ANZAC experience? In this sense, 'little Scotland's story' was indeed part of a much larger story spanning the entire world.

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