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MEMOIRS OF A HIGHLAND SOLDIER

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

CHAPTER I.

I ENLISTED for H. M. 92nd Gordon Highlanders in 1867. At that time I was a bound apprentice and could not with safety enlist in my native town (Inverness), so I made up my mind to try and persuade a few of my chums in the "Clach" to run away from home as far as Glasgow and there enlist for the "gallant Gordons." Previous to all this, about as many as forty young lads like myself used to gather in the evenings in Sandy McLean's, the turner's shop, and there listen to him reading James Grant's novels, which at that time were all the rage in the Highland capital. Sandy was a fine reader, and after reading a certain portion he would stop and explain the meaning of what he had read and make us almost feel we were in Spain fighting with our grandfathers. I will confine my story to his reading of the "Romance of War," or the Highlanders in Spain. I shall never forget when he came to near the end of the book where it says: "When the Gordons came in sight of Scotland after their long march from Dover, the cheering was terrible." Here Sandy had to stop, for he and all of us were in tears. He then said, "I cannot read more to-night," and we all made for our homes. The book referred to is almost all about the gallant conduct of the 92nd during the whole of the Peninsular war.

I had always a love for the army, and after hearing about the 92nd, I made up my mind that I would enlist in no other regiment. I was so determined to do so that I had 92nd tattooed on my right arm so as I could show it to the recruiting sergeant. Some weeks after I had my mates ready to start for Fort Augustus. It was in the month of May. We all (twelve of us) mustered at the end of Tomnahurich street at 4 a.m., and started on our tramp. We arrived at Fort Augustus about 7 p.m. same day. In a day or so we were in Oban, and there took the boat to Glasgow. The Clansman, I think, was the name by which this boat was called.

We arrived in the big toon o' Glasgow at about 4 a.m. with three and sixpence all told. As soon as daylight came we were at the famous Cross of Glasgow, and in the Tontine with Sergeant McIntyre treating us all round. He was a proud man that day securing so many pure Highlanders, and all for his own regiment. He had a grand time parading us before the other recruiting sergeants. We all knew McIntyre well, for he had enlisted many fine young fellows in Inverness, and was very popular until Provost Lyon Mackenzie and Sergeant McIntyre disagreed. After getting a good meal, we were all marched to Shamrock Street Barracks, and there treated to a nice shower bath,

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