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NOTICES OF MAJOR-GENERAL WILLIAM ROY, FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS OF CARLUKE AND OTHER SOURCES. BY D. R. RANKEN, ESQ., CARLUKE.

Every earnest student must have experienced the desire to know more of the personal history and labours of General Roy¹ than any of the biographical notices of him supply. In the "Lives of Eminent Scotsmen," published in 1835, a short notice of him will be found in an appendix—a notice which does not even fix the place of his nativity. In the account of the parish of Carluke, by the Rev. Dr James Scott, written in 1792, for Sir John Sinclair's "Statistical Account," it is stated that General Roy was a native of the parish; and the Rev. Stephen Bell of Eyemouth, who, in 1839, wrote the article "Carluke" for the "New Statistical Account of Scotland," mentions the place and date of birth. The register of baptisms of Carluke, under the year 1726, has the following entry: "Wm. S. to John Roy, was born, May 4. Baptized, May 12. Capt. Walter Lockhart, and Gavin Muir, witnesses." General Roy was therefore a Lanarkshire man. His father lived at Milton-head, in Carluke parish, and was gardener as well as land-steward or factor in the service of the Hamiltons of Halleraig; and, as such, his name occurs frequently in the sederunt of heritors, as acting for Sir William Gordon, and his son Mr Charles Hamilton Gordon of Halleraig and Milton, from 1739 onwards. He was appointed on several occasions to transact business for the heritors. For example, in 1742, he was chosen "to sell the kirk clock and case;" in 1746, he was appointed "to receive estimates for repairing the bridge near the Manse;" in 1747, he was requested to "sell as many trees growing round the minister's yard" as would make up a certain sum, &c., &c. He was ordained an elder of the kirk 3d July 1737, and died towards the end of 1748, aged 51. John Roy, the General's grandfather, held a similar position under the Hamiltons of Halleraig; and his uncle, James Roy, acted in somewhat the same

¹ See Notices of General Roy and his family, by D. R. Rankin, Esq., Carluke, in vol. i. of the Proceedings, p. 145.

capacity under the Lockharts of Lee. The first time the name of the elder John Roy occurs in any of the parochial registers is in the Poll-tax list for 1695, two years before the birth of the Général's father, namely, 15th April 1697. The entry in the Poll-tax list is as follows:—"Jo. roy serviter to My Lord halleraig—00.19.04."

William (General Roy) and his brother James were educated at the school of their native parish under Mr John Russell, the former partly at the grammar school of Lanark, and it is uncertain whether he had the benefit of any higher scholastic training; but it is well known that James, his younger brother, held the bursary in the grammar school and college of Glasgow, founded in 1737 by the Countess of Forfar, from 1738 till 1751, and, after finishing his studies, he held in 1756 an appointment at Shettleston Chapel of Ease; acted as assistant to the ministers of St Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, for several years; and ultimately was presented to the parish of Prestonpans in 1765, where he lived scarcely two years, his death occurring on the 3d of September 1767, at the age of 37.

During the military operations of 1745-6 to suppress the rebellion, headed by Prince Charles Stuart, from experience gained in conducting his forces, the fact was forced upon the Duke of Cumberland that by the opening up of the country by good roads, and by a proper knowledge of its topographical features, military operations could be made more effective and certain. Soon after the Prince's rout at Culloden, a survey of Scotland was accordingly resolved upon. Roy was early engaged in that important work in a subordinate position; for his name does not occur in the Army List for many years after that time. In 1747 Roy acted in the capacity of Deputy Quarter-Master in the survey corps—a post which he may have held during the greater part of eight years before the survey was interrupted by the urgent need of forces for the protection of the patrimonial possessions of his Majesty in Germany, in which service he was called to take an active part, a movement ultimately involving Britain in war with France, which extended to North America and to India.

This may be a fit place to record the military progress of the future General. The first time that the name of William Roy appears in the Army List is in March 1757; and the following statement, compiled from successive army lists, comprehends almost all that is known on the subject:—

1757. March.—Practitioner of Engineers (at 3s. per day).
 1757. May 14.—Practitioner of Engineers, as Ensign of the corps,
 with rank in the army as Lieutenant from 4th
 January 1756.
1759. March 17.—Sub-Engineer—Lieutenant of Engineers.
 1759. September 10.—Engineer in Ordinary—Captain of Engineers.
 1762. July 23.—Engineer in Ordinary—Lieut.-Col. in the Army.
 1763. January—Deputy Quarter-Master in Germany.
 1764-6.—Lieut.-Col. in the Army—Captain of Engineers.
 1767-90.—Deputy Quarter-Master General.
 1777. August 29.—Colonel in the Army—Captain of Engineers.
 1778. May 30.—Commissary-General of Stores, provision and forage
 to all the forces at home and abroad.
1781. October 19.—Major-General in the Army—Capt. of Engineers.
 1783. January 1.—Lieut.-Col. of Engineers—Major-Gen. in the Army.
 1785. September 19.—Col. of Engineers—Major-Gen. in the Army.
 1786. November 15.—Colonel of 30th Foot—(name removed from
 Engineer's lists).
- 1790.—In the Army List of this year, General Roy's name appears
 for the last time 17th on the list of Major-
 Generals.

In the obituary notices of the time, in the "Gentleman's Magazine" and in the "Scots Magazine," he is represented as holding the position of Colonel of Artillery in charge of the survey of Scotland in 1746, when only twenty years of age, and held no place in the Army List till ten years later, an error carried forward by Watt's "Bibliotheca," the "Annual Register," the "Lives of Eminent Scotsmen," &c., to the "Scottish Nation" of yesterday. During the survey it is well known that he acted under Lieut.-Colonel David Watson in quite a subordinate position.

Of the services of General Roy in the field, in that momentous period comprehending the later years of the reign of George II. and early part of the reign of George III., nothing is known beyond the result of frequent engagements in Germany in combination with the Prussian army. But his scientific career can be more fully traced. With the peace of 1763, the Government had under consideration the scheme of a general survey of

the British Islands, to be under the direction of General (then Colonel) Roy, but nothing was done in twelve years of peace, and the American war put an end for the time to the project. The General was in Scotland in 1764 taking plans of Roman works, and collecting material for his "Military Antiquities of the Romans in Britain"—a work of great merit, published three years after his death by the Antiquarian Society of London, of which he was a member. The survey of Scotland on which Roy had been long engaged with a corps of Engineers resulted in a work known as the Duke of Cumberland's map, executed on a scale which afforded scope for minute details. This map, in manuscript, is preserved in the Ordnance Office, and although admitted to be imperfect in some respects, it certainly was a matchless production for its time. In 1774, under the title "Mappa Britanniaë," &c., Roy produced this map on a reduced scale, on a single sheet 18 by 23½ inches, a map which again appeared in the valuable posthumous work above referred to.¹

General Roy was elected a member of the Royal Society 26th March, and admitted 9th April 1767. For this Society he prepared and read a succession of interesting and most valuable communications, extending over the last twelve years of his life, all of which not only appeared in the Philosophical Transactions, but were published in a separate form. The first of these was a highly interesting paper read in 1777—"On experiments and observations made in Britain in order to attain a rule for the measuring of heights with the barometer." Halley, Deluc, and Sir George Shuckburgh had previously investigated the subject, the last with great accuracy; but the formulas for the measurement of heights by this method, carefully tested by the old and tedious mode of levelling, are due to the labours of General Roy.

In advance of any public measure, the General was in 1783 found at work, as a labour of love, projecting a base line for an extended triangulation, in order to fix certain conspicuous local points in relation to each

¹ It may be worthy of notice that during his investigations in reference to the various atmospheric influences on the barometer, General Roy not only made experiments on the expansion of mercury—of the glass tubes containing it, and of air when heated; but also on the *expansion of air and vapour of water in various proportions*, and through a considerable range of temperature and pressure—experiments, the first on record, which indicated the now well-known law, subsequently propounded by Dalton, regarding mixtures of vapours and gases.

other. This paved the way for more extended operations soon after entered upon, resulting in an account of minute details in the well-known paper read before the Royal Society, for which the Capley medal for 1787 was awarded; a paper followed in 1790, by "An Account of Trigonometrical Operations, whereby the distance between the meridians of the Royal Observatories of Greenwich and Paris can be determined," the printing of which the General was engaged in superintending for the Philosophical Transactions at the time of his death. In conducting these observations great difficulty was experienced from want of appropriate instruments, which, in some degree, was obviated by the generosity of George III., who provided funds and took a deep interest in the experiments. The standard of length used in these experiments, it is believed, is still preserved in the Royal Observatory. The general survey of the British Islands, contemplated in 1763, was not finally entered upon till 1791, when Roy was no more, and has ever since been extended towards completion.

The death of General Roy was sudden. It is said that the night on which he died he was transacting business at the War Office till 8 o'clock. He died at his house in Argyll street, after two hours' illness, on the 30th June 1790, having just entered his 65th year. At his death he was Colonel of the 30th Foot, and held the offices of Deputy Quarter-Master of his Majesty's forces, surveyor of the coasts and batteries, was a Fellow of the Royal Society and of the Society of Antiquaries, London.