

# allies & adversaries

OUR SHARED HISTORY



A special G8 online publication  
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from the collections of The Inniskillings Museum

# The Inniskilling Regiments

Enniskillen has the unique honour of being the only town in Great Britain and Ireland to give its name to two regiments, the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers (infantry) and 5<sup>th</sup> Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards (cavalry), now part of the Royal Irish Regiment and Royal Dragoon Guards.

The two Inniskilling Regiments have their origins in the civil and religious conflict of the late seventeenth century in Great Britain and Ireland between forces loyal to the Catholic King James II and others loyal to the Protestant King William III.

In 1688 in Enniskillen and the surrounding counties, groups of Protestant volunteers, called '*Enniskillingers*' were organised into defence forces of foot soldiers and horsemen. For six months, by defiant attacks on forces loyal to King James, these armed volunteers successfully defended their town and villages. Regular officers of King William's army, along with military supplies, were sent to Enniskillen to provide professional training and leadership. Six regiments were formed and became a part of the army of King William.

The Enniskillen regiments took part in the campaign across Ireland against King James, who had arrived in Ireland in 1689 with a French army, and had linked up with the Irish forces loyal to him. The Inniskillingers fought at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, and went on, with the Williamite army, to further victories at the Siege of Athlone and the Battle of Aughrim in July 1691. The final collapse of the Jacobite forces came at the Siege of Limerick. Grenadiers led by Colonel Tiffin and supported by his regiment of Inniskillings forced their way into the city and brought about its surrender.

At the end of the war in Ireland the Enniskillen regiments were consolidated into two regiments in the British Army, Tiffin's Regiment of Foot and Conyngham's Regiment of Horse.

It often puzzles people when they notice that the name on the regiments' crests, **Inniskilling**, is spelt differently from that of the town, **Enniskillen**. The town takes its name from the Gaelic words Inis Ceithleann, which means Kathleen's Island. When anglicised, the words had many different spellings and it is said there have been at least thirty! Eventually the regiments chose **Inniskilling** and the town evolved as **Enniskillen**.

The names of the regiments also changed before settling as the 5<sup>th</sup> Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards and the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. At the time of the raising of the regiments in the seventeenth century, regiments carried the name of their Colonel. The two Inniskilling regiments began as Conyngham's Horse and Tiffin's Regiment of Foot.

In 1751 each regiment in the army was given a number which reflected the regiment's seniority in the army. The Horse regiment became **6<sup>th</sup> Inniskilling Dragoons**, and the Foot regiment became the **27<sup>th</sup> (Inniskilling) Regiment of Foot**.

Amalgamations brought further changes. In 1881 the 27<sup>th</sup> regiment was amalgamated with the 108<sup>th</sup> regiment to become the **Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers**. In 1922 the 6<sup>th</sup> Inniskilling Dragoons were amalgamated with the 5<sup>th</sup> Dragoon Guards. The new regiment was called 5th/6<sup>th</sup> Dragoons. In 1927 this was re-titled 5<sup>th</sup> Inniskilling Dragoon Guards and finally, in 1935, the **5<sup>th</sup> Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards**.



# Canada

## Britain versus France 1600-1763

In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries Great Britain and France were rivals for control of North America. English speaking settlers colonised the eastern seaboard and French speaking settlers the St Lawrence River valley and the Great Lakes. Their two main towns were Montreal and Quebec.

## The Seven Years War 1754-1763

Britain mounted a campaign to take over the French colonies. The 27<sup>th</sup> Inniskillings were part of an army attacking the French forts along the Hudson River valley, which lead north to the St Lawrence. The regiment garrisoned captured forts and was present at the surrender of Montreal in 1760 and from 1765 to 1767 provided garrison troops in Montreal and Quebec. In 1765, in Quebec, the regiment was one of three which mutinied when their allowances for provisions were cut. Under threat of death, the mutiny ended but the allowances were restored. Canada became part of the British Empire.

## Anglo/American War 1812-1814

The 27<sup>th</sup> Inniskillings were part of British reinforcements sent to defend Canada from invasion by the United States.

## The First World War 1914-1918

Canada sent an Expeditionary Force to France and Belgium. 600,000 Canadian troops served and became formidable opponents of the German Army. The Canadians fought alongside Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in several battles on the Western Front.

## The Second World War 1939-1945

Canadian troops landed in Tunisia in 1942 with the 38th Irish Brigade, (6th Inniskillings) and fought with the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6th Inniskilling in the invasion of Sicily and Italy from 1943 to 1945. A Canadian infantry division landed on Juno beach for the Normandy landings in 1944. The Inniskilling Dragoons joined the Allied army for the push across northern France and into Belgium, Holland and across the Rhine into Germany. Canadian pilots flew from Lough Erne in Catalina and Sunderland seaplanes on anti-submarine patrols over the north Atlantic.

## The Cold War 1945 - 1989

Canada was a member of NATO, a defensive alliance against the Soviet Union. Both Inniskilling regiments served in the British Army of the Rhine and trained alongside Canadian forces. The Inniskilling Dragoons went on training exercises to Canada, as did the successor regiment to the Inniskilling Fusiliers, The Royal Irish Rangers. The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers were affiliated with the Princess Louise Fusiliers, a Canadian Reserve regiment based in Nova Scotia.



**Clockwise from above:**

Horns for carrying gunpowder used by Inniskillings during the Anglo French Wars.

A Royal Canadian Air Force Catalina flying over High Street, Enniskillen during World War Two.

Princess Louise Fusiliers insignia, 1932.

Royal Canadian Air Force graves, Irvinestown, County Fermanagh.

A Short Sunderland Flying Boat moored in Aghinver Bay at RAF Castle Archdale during World War Two.



# France

## Rivalry

For most of the eighteenth century, up to the battle of Waterloo in 1815, Great Britain and France were at war, both in Europe and overseas. The rivalry extended to the far corners of the world as both countries tried to control sources of wealth in India, the West Indies and North America. Both Inniskilling regiments fought in the British army against France. They fought side by side in the battle of Waterloo, the final defeat of Napoleon.

## The Crimean War 1854-1856

However, as the nineteenth century progressed, the two countries found that their common interests took increasing precedence over ancient rivalries. They were allies, 1854-1856, in a war against Russia, in which the 6<sup>th</sup> Inniskilling Dragoons served. This war led to the capture of the main Russian naval base, Sebastopol, in the Black Sea on the Crimean peninsula.

## The First World War 1914-1918

Both countries were staunch allies against Germany and her allies. Ten battalions of the Inniskilling Fusiliers and the Inniskilling Dragoons served on the Western Front alongside their French allies.



## The Second World War 1939-1945

In 1940 the two Inniskillings regiments served with the French army in the unsuccessful attempt to stop the German invasion of France. Great Britain was the base for Free French operations against Nazi occupied France. Inniskilling Fusiliers would have fought alongside Free French forces in the liberation of Tunisia in 1942-43 and Italy 1943-1945.

## The Cold War 1945-1989

In the Cold War period, 1945-1989, both countries co-operated in the defence of Western Europe against possible aggression from the Soviet Union.

### Above:

Inspection of the Inniskillings by Generals Gort and Georges in France, 1939.



**Clockwise from above:**

Inniskilling Fusiliers hand over Spandau Prison guard duties to the French, Berlin, 1965.

Miniature painting of Hugh McKay who served at the Battle of Waterloo.

French helmet from World War One.

Inniskilling and French soldiers at a Berlin railway station, 1965.

Private Callaghan's Peninsular War Medal with 13 clasps, 1810-1814.  
(One of only four with 13 clasps).

Croix de guerre (1914-1918) awarded to an Inniskilling Officer in World War One.



# Germany

## European Alliances 1685-1815

In most of Britain's wars in Europe against France, she was often allied to German states like Hanover or Prussia. The Inniskilling Dragoons fought in all the campaigns in Europe. In 1815, at the battle of Waterloo, the arrival of the Prussian army on the battlefield towards the end of the day had a decisive effect on the defeat of the French army. Enniskillen's two regiments played key roles in that battle.

## Rivalry 1870-1945

However, after the creation of the German Empire in 1870, old alliances broke down as Britain and Germany became rivals for Empire and trade. The twentieth century saw two devastating wars against Germany.



**Clockwise from left:**

Plaque taken from a German train, Königlich Preussische Eisenbahn Verwaltung, 1918.

The Inniskillings Band march past the Olympic Stadium, Berlin 1964.



## World Wars 1914-1918 & 1939-1945

Ten battalions of the Fusiliers saw active service on the Western Front during World War One. In 1939 the Inniskilling Fusiliers and the Inniskilling Dragoons were in the British Expeditionary Force which went to France and was evacuated from Dunkirk in 1940. The Fusiliers went on to campaign in North Africa and Italy, 1942-45, and the Dragoons returned to France after the Normandy landings in 1944 and ended their war in the city of Hamburg.

## The Cold War 1945-1989

During the Cold War alliance with Germany was restored in the defence of Western Europe against possible Soviet aggression.



**Clockwise from above:**

Inniskillings in Berlin, 1964.

German ceremonial helmet, circa 1914.

5th Inniskilling Dragoon Guards  
Chieftain Tank in front of the  
Brandenberg Gate, Berlin.



# Italy

Before Italian unification in 1870 Great Britain was, at times, an ally of different Italian States. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, as an ally of the Kingdom of Naples, Britain had an army in Sicily which included the 27<sup>th</sup> Inniskilling Regiment of Foot. In 1807 that army landed south of Naples to protect the kingdom against the French, and defeated them at the battle of Maida.

After the battle the Inniskillings were allowed to bathe in the sea to wash off the dust and dirt of the battle. An alarm was raised when a dust cloud was spotted and, fearing a French attack, the naked soldiers had to run for their muskets. It proved to be a false alarm: the dust cloud was caused by a herd of buffaloes. This may be the origin of the nick name given to the regiment – the ‘Skins’.

## The Crimean War 1854-1856

In 1855 the 6<sup>th</sup> Inniskilling Dragoons were in the British army which, with a French army, fought alongside soldiers of the Kingdom of Sardinia in a successful campaign against Sebastopol in the Crimea, the Russian naval base in the Black Sea.

## The First World War 1914 - 1918

Italy entered the war in 1915 against Germany and Austria/

Hungary. Italy sent troops to Salonika to help defend Greece from a Bulgarian invasion. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Inniskillings also served there with 10<sup>th</sup> (Irish) Division.

## The Second World War 1939 - 1945

Inniskilling Fusiliers fought in the campaign against Italian and German forces in Tunisia and in Sicily in 1942 and 1943.

## The Cold War 1939-1945

The two Inniskilling regiments were in British forces, allied with Italy in NATO against the threat from the Soviet Union.



**Above:**

An Inniskilling on sentry duty, Sicilian village of Centriue, 1943.



**Clockwise from top:**

Band of the Irish Brigade at St Peter's Basilica, Rome 1944.

An Inniskilling Piper (left) and an Irish Fusilier Piper meet the Papal Noble Guard, 1944.

Italian regimental badges from World War One.

# Japan

## China 1909-1911

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Japan, alongside most European nations, used the weakness of the Chinese Empire to obtain trading and political concessions. These rights, generally obtained through military power, gave each nation 'treaty rights' in Chinese ports where military garrisons were often stationed. Japan had five treaty ports. The powers cooperated in the defence of their rights. Japanese soldiers operated alongside Inniskilling Fusiliers when the regiment served in northern China from 1909 to 1911.

## The First World War 1914-1918

Japan was allied to Britain and France. The Japanese navy protected the Pacific and China seas from the German navy. In 1917 a squadron of 17 Japanese warships was sent to the Mediterranean where it provided escort for troopships and engaged in anti-submarine operations.

## The Second World War 1939-1945

In the period after 1918 Japan began to expand its Far Eastern empire and, inevitably began to challenge the position there of European nations and the United States. Japan's attack on the American fleet in Pearl Harbour in December 1941 precipitated

war. Japan rapidly overran the British colonies of Singapore, Malaya and Burma. On two occasions, in 1942 and 1943 the Inniskillings, with British and Indian forces, were sent into Burma to drive back the Japanese army. Both campaigns failed and the Inniskillings suffered very heavy casualties from enemy action, disease and hunger in the retreat through the jungle.

## After 1945

Britain's Far Eastern Empire shrank and by 1960 there were no British troops in the Far East apart from Hong Kong. Japan became a firm ally of the United States.



**Above:**  
Japanese flag, bugle and Samurai sword.



**Clockwise from above:**

Painting of 1st Battalion Inniskilling Fusiliers officers, Burma 1943.

A Japanese soldier in China, 1910.

A pocket watch which saved the life of Lieutenant Dickie in Burma.



# Russia

## War against Napoleon

As Russia emerged in the 18<sup>th</sup> as a European power, she frequently found herself in alliance with Great Britain, particularly against France. Russian armies played a major role in the defeat of Napoleon and Russian soldiers occupied Paris in 1815 along side the British and Prussian army. The 27<sup>th</sup> Inniskillings, having fought against Napoleon at Waterloo, were part of that occupying army.

## The Crimean War 1854-1856

However as the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed Russian imperial expansion against Turkey in the Black Sea and towards the Mediterranean threatened the interests of Britain and France. War broke out in 1854 and an Anglo/French army, to be joined later by Italian troops from the Kingdom of Sardinia, attacked the Russian naval port in the Black Sea at Sebastopol. 6<sup>th</sup> Inniskilling Dragoons served in the British army where they were involved in a number of actions against Russian Cossacks, most notably at the battle of Balaclava. Sebastopol was eventually captured, but at terrible human cost.

## The First World War 1914-1918

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the growing power of the German Empire brought Russia back into alliance with Britain. In the First World War Russian armies fought in the east against Germany and Austria/Hungary. This prevented the full strength of the German army from being brought to bear on the British and French armies in the west. The development of communism in Russia after 1917 poisoned relations with the West.

## The Second World War 1939-1945

From 1941 to 1945 Russia, now the Soviet Union, was allied with the Western Nations against Nazi Germany. The Inniskilling Fusiliers came into contact with Soviet forces at the end of the war when the British army was occupying northern Italy and Austria. Russian forces jointly occupied Austria and cooperation was needed between the victorious allies.

## The Cold War 1945-1989

New Alliances, NATO and the Warsaw Pact, faced one another in nuclear armed rivalry. Both regiments of Inniskillings served NATO in the British Army of the Rhine, and helped garrison West Berlin in the 1950s and 1960s.



**Clockwise from above:**

Order of St Stanislaus, awarded by the Czar of Russia to an Inniskilling Officer, World War One.

Crimea campaign medals awarded to Troop Sergeant Major Shields, 6th Inniskilling Dragoons (left - British medal, right - Turkish medal).

6th Inniskilling Dragoon, Balaclava, 1854.

Russian invitation to a commanding officer of the Inniskillings.

Inniskilling Fusiliers Band in Austria, 1945



# United States of America

## On American soil 1758-1814

The Inniskillings were in North America on three occasions, once as a friend and twice as an enemy. During the French/Indian wars, 1758-1760 the regiment was engaged along side American militia forces in the successful campaign to drive the French out of North America. Men from the regiment volunteered to learn forest craft and to serve in Roger's Rangers behind-the-lines scouts.

## The War of Independence 1775-1783

When the 13 colonies rebelled against British rule in 1775, the 27th Inniskilling Regiment of Foot was part of the British army trying to suppress the rebellion. Its regimental band led General Howe's successful occupation of Philadelphia. However the regiment was sent to the West Indies and did not participate in the subsequent British defeat.

## Defending Canada 1812-1814

In the war of 1812-14 the regiment was part of reinforcements sent to Canada to defend it against an American invasion.

## The First World War 1914-1918

In 1917 America entered the First World War and a large expeditionary force was sent to France to fight alongside the

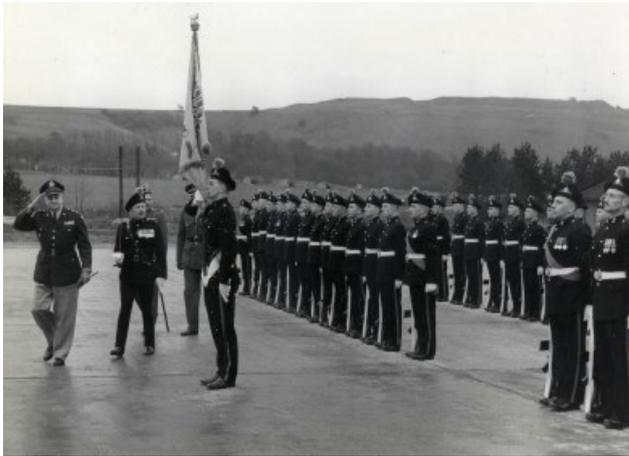
British and French. The Inniskilling Fusiliers had 10 battalions fighting alongside the Americans in the closing stages of the war.

## The Second World War 1939-1945

In 1941 America entered the war against Nazi Germany and Japan. The first transatlantic campaign America was involved in was in landings in Morocco and Algeria in 1942, where American soldiers fought alongside a battalion of the Inniskilling Fusiliers in the Irish Brigade in the British army. They continued as comrades in arms into Sicily and Italy. The Inniskilling Dragoons landed in France in 1944 shortly after the Normandy landings and remained as comrades in arms with US forces across France and into Germany. In 1942 American troops began to arrive in Northern Ireland. Some were garrisoned in County Fermanagh where General Eisenhower reviewed them in parade on the playing fields of Portora Royal School.

## The Cold War 1945-1989

During the Cold war the two regiments served in the British army as part of the British Army of the Rhine as an American ally in NATO in the defence of Western Europe against a possible threat from the Soviet Union.



**Clockwise from above:**

US General Mead inspects Inniskillings Guard of honour, 1957.

A GI training in County Fermanagh, 1943.

An Officer of the 27th Foot at the American War of Independence, 1780.

GIs in Belmore Street, Enniskillen, 1943.

Eisenhower inspects GIs in Enniskillen, 1943.



## THE INNISKILLINGS MUSEUM

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