

# THE TRULY HORRIFIC HISTORY OF DUNFERMLINE ATHLETIC FOOTBALL CLUB

## PART 3: HOW THE FIRST WORLD WAR CAME TO DUNFERMLINE ATHLETIC

In Dunfermline, most of the football team volunteered for War Service, and the regular football leagues were stopped by the end of 1914.

In addition, the army commandeered (took over) East End Park for keeping horses and heavy transport wagons on. We think the grass was very well manured!

Some of the players volunteered for the local regiment which was the Black Watch, and others joined the Scottish Sporting Battalion, often known as McCrae's Battalion.

Sir George McCrae, the colonel, was married to a Dunfermline girl, from the New Row, and many local men went to this battalion (16th Royal Scots).

Unfortunately this unit was right in the battle front when the British Army attacked on 1 July 1916 on the Somme. Many Dunfermline men died, as part of the 20,000 killed that day.



*Men waiting in line to go 'over the top' during the Battle of the Somme.*



*David Hunter - soldier, VC recipient and Pars fan.*

Included in the numbers were Davie Izatt, the Dunfermline left back, and Jimmy Morton, a member of the Committee of the Club.

Dunfermline had two local men who won the Victoria Cross in that war. They were:

John Erskine, a young shop owner, from Park Avenue. He won his VC in 1916 for rescuing wounded comrades whilst under enemy fire. Sadly, he was killed in 1917 trying to repeat the feat.

David Hunter, a coal miner from Kingseat, won his medal for refusing to surrender in 1918, although his little group of seven men were surrounded. They held out until help arrived two days later.

David was a regular supporter of Dunfermline Athletic for more than another forty years.

**Want to know more?**  
<http://bit.ly/historypars3>