

Captain & Honorary Major William Gillespie (1842 – 1909)

12th Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteer Corps

“I” Company

1st Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteers

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1. Personal Details :

Born: 26th April 1841, Larbert, Stirlingshire

Baptised: n/k

Married: 27th December 1870, Falkirk

Educated: n/k

Died: 7th April 1909, Linlithgow

Buried: Larbert Parish Churchyard

Probate: 21st August 1909, £2270



2. Volunteer Decoration



Wat Office, November 22, 1892.

HER Majesty the Queen has been graciously pleased to confer the Volunteer Officers' Decoration upon the undermentioned Officers of the Volunteer Force, who have been duly recommended for the same under the terms of the Royal Warrant, dated 25th July, 1892 :—

*4th (Stirlingshire) Volunteer Battalion, Princess Louise's (Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders).
Captain and Honorary Major William Gillespie,
retired.*

**Captain & Honorary Major
William Gillespie**

Awarded Volunteer Decoration: 22nd November 1892 (London & Edinburgh Gazette)

3. Military Appointments Overview

- 1862: joined 12th Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteer Corps ("12th SRVC") as a Private
- June 1863: won 2nd prize in rifle competition, Carron Range, as Private
- 6th Feb. 1865: appointed Ensign, 12th SRVC
- 2nd May 1867: promoted Lieutenant, 12th SRVC
- 29th Jul. 1869: present at opening of new Drill House
- 25th May 1878: promoted Captain, 12th SRVC
- 1884/5: granted title Honorary Major
- 29th Jul. 1885: resigned commission, 1st Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteers
- 21st Nov. 1885: Dinner & Presentation hosted by 1st Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteers at Crown Hotel, on retirement from Volunteers
- 22nd Nov. 1892: awarded Volunteer Decoration

William Gillespie, Gent., to be Ensign, vice Eason, promoted. Dated 6th February, 1865.

Commissions signed by the Lord Lieutenant of the County of Stirling.

12th Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteer Corps.
Ensign William Gillespie to be Lieutenant, vice Eason, resigned. Dated 2d May 1867.

12th Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteer Corps.
Lieutenant William Gillespie to be Captain.
Dated 25th May, 1878.

STENHOUSEMUIR.
THE VOLUNTEERS.—At a general meeting of the 12th Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteers, held in the Drill Hall on Wednesday evening, 12th inst., the following promotions were made:—Wm. Gillespie, jun., Carbrook, lieutenant, to be captain; Robt. Webster, ensign, to be lieutenant; David Duncan, colour-sergeant, to be ensign; Wm. Kemp, sergeant, to be colour-sergeant; James M'Coustra, corporal, to be sergeant; Archd. Smith, private, and James Roughead, private, to be lance-corporals. The appointments of Messrs Gillespie, Webster, and Duncan have still to be confirmed by the Lord-Lieutenant, by whom commissions are signed, and after this they will be gazetted.

THE FALKIRK HERALD AND LINLITHGOW JOURNAL, THURSDAY, MAY 20, 1869.

1st Stirlingshire, Captain and Honorary Major William Gillespie resigns his Commission; also is permitted to retain his rank, and to continue to wear the uniform of the Corps on his retirement. Dated 29th July, 1885.

2. Military Appointments Overview

II. 12th Stirlingshire (Carron) Rifle Volunteer Corps

- 10th Feb 1862: Formation of the 12th (Carron) Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteer Corps (“12th SRVC”)
- 27th May 1862: Swearing in ceremony of 12th SRVC., in presence of Lt.Col. Dundas, some 30 volunteers present, majority came from Carron Iron Works.
Officers: Captain J B Sherriff, Lt. Campbell, Ensign Adam.
- 20th Sept. 1862: First annual rifle competition at Carron range.
Uniform trews of Graham tartan, with rifle green tunic with scarlet collars, cuffs black Austrian
- 29th March 1863: Destruction of unit’s rifles at armoury at back of Carron Inn, Falkirk. £50 reward offered by Captain Sherriff for information.
- Jul /Nov 1863: Conflict between Captain Sherriff & Ltn Campbell, over former’s lack of advising Campbell of appointment of James Eason as Ensign. Led to publication of letter correspondence in local paper over the period. Resulting in resignation of Ltn. Campbell from the Corps.
- 1863: Deprived of armoury, rifle range at Carron, risk of Corps folding. Ensign Webster, accompanied by 30 members, went to Captain Sherriff’s residence and mutually agreed to keep Corps going.
- Feb 1864: Corps has a Corps Band led by Thomas Cowan
- 16th Jan 1868: new Drill Hall, Tryst Road, opened, paid by members & Carron community; included armoury, officer’s room, reading room, hall. Used by Corps & local community & public events.

2. Military Appointments Overview

II. 12th Stirlingshire (Carron) Rifle Volunteer Corps

- 1865 – 73: Corps utilised Dorrator Rifle Range, thereafter Larbert Range from 1874 onwards.
- 31st July 1869: Corps has 65 rank & file, 2 officers & a band.
- 1870's / 80's: Corps numbers fluctuated between 70 – 80, with most Corps members being from the Carron Iron Works. Only in the 1890s did the Corps reach 90+ members.
- 29th Jan. 1871: Presentation to Ensign Webster, 3rd recruit to Corps, in recognition of keeping Corps alive in 1863. Corps had 94 members.
- 3rd Jan. 1871: Ltn. W Gillespie entertained Company at Plough Inn, Stenhousemuir on occasion of his marriage
- 30th Sept. 1880: With reorganisation of the Volunteers, 12th SRV became "I" Company (Carron) 1st Stirling Rifle Volunteers. Officers at time , Captain Gillespie, Lt. Dobbie, Lt Duncan Rev. M'Hare, Chaplain of the Company.

2. Military Appointments Overview

II. 1st Stirlingshire Rifle Volunteer Corps

9 th June 1860:	The 1 st Stirlingshire Admin. Battalion was formed, HQ at Stirling, overseeing the 12 separate rifle volunteer corps across Stirlingshire, including 12 th SRVC.
March 1880:	With reorganisation of the Volunteers, independent rifle volunteer corps were amalgamated under 1st Stirlingshire RVC. 10 companies formed. 12 th SRV became "I" Company (Carron), 1 st Stirling Rifle Volunteers.
25 th August 1881:	"I" Company, under Captain Gillespie, attended Edinburgh Royal Review, in total 3 officers, 5 sergeant & 52 rank & file attended.
29 th Dec.. 1882:	Presentation of Instruments to the band of "I" Company by T D Brodie, Carron Works, value £140, accepted by Bandmaster Clarke. T D Brodie had been & continued to be, a significant financial benefactor to "I" Company's annual subscription
Dec 1887:	The Battalion retitled 4 th (Stirlingshire) Volunteer Battalion, The Argyll & Southern Highlanders
1901 /02:	57 members of the battalion served on active duty in South Africa
1904:	Headquarters of "I" Company moved to Stenhousemuir
April 1908:	The Battalion transferred to the Territorial Force, and with 7 th Volunteer Battalion, formed the 7 th Battalion, The Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders

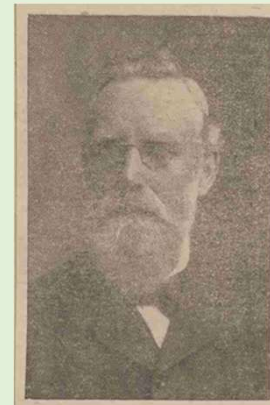
2. Military Appointments Overview

II. Captain Commandants: 12th Stirling Rifle Volunteers

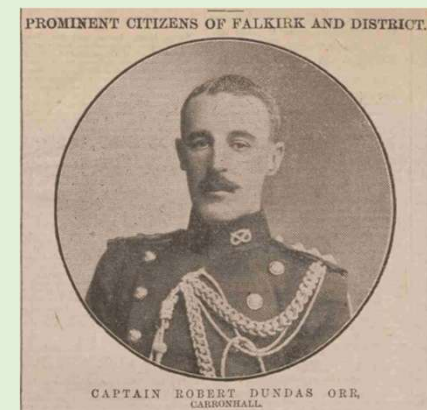
Commanding	Period	Unit Designation
Major J B Sherriff:	1862 – 1864	12 th SRVC
Lieutenant J Eason	1864 – 1866	12 th SRVC
Major W Gillespie	1866 – 1885	12 th SRVC / I Company 1 st SRV
Major Dobbie:	1885 – 1893	I Company; 4 th VB A&SH
Captain R P Roy:	1893 – 1896	I Company; 4 th VB A&SH
Captain R D Orr:	1896 – 1905	D Company; 4 th VB A&SH



Major Dobbie,
1845 - 1908,



- Major James B Sherriff (1822 - 1896)
Merchant, Landowner
- Lieutenant John Eason (1841 – ?)
Farmer heritage, born Larbert
- Major William Gillespie (1842 – 1909)
Farmer.
- Major Dobbie (1845 – 1908)
Iron Master.
- Captain Robert Proudfoot Roy (1849 – 1911)
Mechanical Engineer. Lived in Larbert.
- Captain R Dundas Orr (1879 - 1914)
Partner, James Ross & Co, Chemical Manufacturers

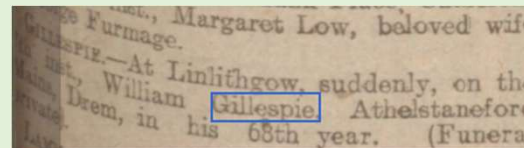


3. Private Life (1)

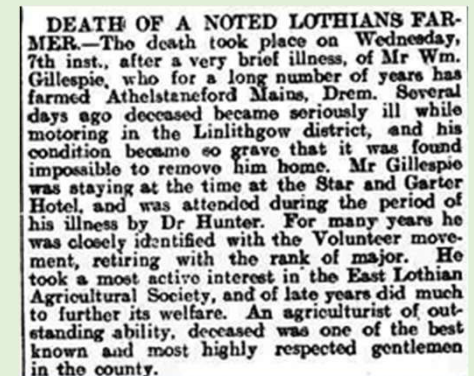
- **Father:** William Gillespie (1800 – 1880), Farmer
- **Mother:** Jean Nicol (1807 – 1864)
- **Siblings:** Jean (b.1836), John (b.1839), Elizabeth (b.1843), Margaret (b.1845)
- **Married:** Anne Stewart Young (1846 – 1920)
- **Children:** William (b.1871), John (b.1874), James (b.1880), Robert (b.1883), Peter (b.1885)

- **Where lived:** Kersbrock Farm, Stenhousemuir, Stirlingshire
Athelstaneford Mains, Drem.

- **Interests:** East Lothian Agricultural Society



... Margaret Low, beloved wife
... At Linlithgow, suddenly, on the
... William Gillespie Athelstaneford
... Drem, in his 68th year. (Funeral



DEATH OF A NOTED LOTHIAN'S FARMER.—The death took place on Wednesday, 7th inst., after a very brief illness, of Mr Wm. Gillespie, who for a long number of years has farmed Athelstaneford Mains, Drem. Several days ago deceased became seriously ill while motoring in the Linlithgow district, and his condition became so grave that it was found impossible to remove him home. Mr Gillespie was staying at the time at the Star and Garter Hotel, and was attended during the period of his illness by Dr Hunter. For many years he was closely identified with the Volunteer movement, retiring with the rank of major. He took a most active interest in the East Lothian Agricultural Society, and of late years did much to further its welfare. An agriculturist of outstanding ability, deceased was one of the best known and most highly respected gentlemen in the county.

4. Professional Life

- 3rd generation farmer Kersebrook Farm, Stenhousemuir. Grandfather obtained lease 1795.
- William Gillespie Jnr. took over tenancy at Kersebrook Farm (owned by T D Brodie) from his father, and subsequently vacated in 1885 to manage a larger farm enterprise at Athelstaneford Farm. He was managing the farm up until his death in 1909, which was owned by Sir Alexander Kinlock
- Census data:
 - 1851: Kersebrook Farm, Scholar
 - 1861: Kersebrook Farm, Farmer's son
 - 1871: Kersebrook Farm, Farmer
 - 1881: Kersebrook Farm, of 1490 acres, employing 3 men, 2 girls & 1 boy.
 - 1891: Athelstaneford Mains, Dem.
 - 1901: Athelstaneford Mains, Farmer



5. Sources

GILLESPIE, William, Farmer, Athelstaneford Mains, Drem, died 7 April 1909, at Linlithgow, testate. Confirmation granted at Haddington, 27 August, to Annie Stewart Young or Gillespie, his widow, and William Gillespie, 48 Salamander Street, Leith, his son, Executors nominated in Will or Deed, dated 22 November 1892, and recorded with other Writs in Court Books of Commissariat of Haddington, 21 August 1909. Value of Estate, £2270, 12s. 7d.

RESIGNATION OF CAPTAIN GILLESPIE.—We understand that Captain Gillespie has resigned his commission as captain of the local volunteer corps, retiring from the position with the rank of Major. The gallant Major has been for upwards of twenty years connected with the volunteer movement. He is perhaps as popular an officer as in the district; and very general regret is expressed at the resolution he has formed to sever connection with a corps, the members of which ever regarded their captain as a personal friend.

THE FALKIRK HERALD AND LINLITHGOW JOURNAL, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 1885

RECRUITS WANTED.
I COMPANY.
1ST STIRLINGSHIRE RIFLE VOLUNTEERS.

A FEW SMART YOUNG MEN Wanted to complete the strength of the above Company.—Apply at once to Sergeant-Instructor Wm. MENNIE, Stenhousemuir, as a New Squad is at present being formed. Height not less than 5 feet 5 inches, and 33 inches chest measurement.
WILLIAM GILLESPIE, Captain.
Carron, 5th January, 1882.

Lieut. DOBBIE, remarking that they were just entering upon a new part of the proceedings, desired to say a word or two. It was with regard to a little present which they were now going to present to Captain Gillespie and his wife. (Applause.) He could assure them that he felt certain there was not one there but knew that Captain Gillespie was well worthy of anything they could do for him. They all knew what deep interest he had taken in the Volunteers, especially in the Carron Company. It was now many years since he became connected with that company, and many of them knew the difficulties he had to contend with for a long time; for at that period he was captain, lieutenant, and drill instructor in one. (Laughter and applause.) Better times had dawned since then, and Captain Gillespie had now as good a company as was in the battalion. He merely expressed the wish of the whole of the company when he wished Captain Gillespie long life and prosperity. (Applause.) Miss DAWSON then made the presentation, which consisted of a handsome marble timepiece, together with a chastely-designed bracelet for Mrs Gillespie. The clock bore the following inscription:—"Presented to Capt. Wm. Gillespie, 1st Stirling Rifle Volunteers, as a token of esteem by the members of the I Company, on the 5th Dec. 1884."

13th December 1884 Falkirk Herald.