

Common Military Abbreviations

If you are researching a war memorial or your ancestor's service during the two World Wars you may come across abbreviations with which you may be unfamiliar. This guide is solely a list of these abbreviations and is intended to be used in tandem with other Scottish Military Research Group research guides, which will give more detail to the units and ranks themselves.

There are three sections. Firstly Units, secondly Ranks and lastly Medals and Awards. The abbreviations are listed alphabetically and cover all three armed services and civilian organisations involved in war work.

The list is by no means exhaustive, so if you find an abbreviation we haven't listed here, please contact us.

Units

This list contains many non-Scottish regiments. During the World Wars it was common for Scots to serve in non-Scottish regiments and vice-versa. They are included here because they are commonly found on war memorials, in war diaries and in regimental histories.

A.A.C.	Army Audit Corps (a civilian unit in WW1 Egypt)
A. & S. Hldrs	Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders
A. & S.H.	Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders
A.A.N.S.	Army Auxiliary Nursing Service
A.C.C.	Army Cyclist Corps (WW1)
A.C.C.	Army Catering Corps (WW2)
A.E.C.	Army Education Corps
A.E.F.	Australians
A.F.S.	Auxiliary Fire Service. Superseded by National Fire Service in 1941
A.I.F.	Australian Imperial Force
A.I.T.	Australian Infantry Transport
A.I.L.H.	Australian [Imperial] Light Horse
A.L.H.	Australian Light Horse
A.L.H.F.A.	Australian Light Horse Field Ambulance
A.O.C.	Army Ordnance Corps
A.P.C.	Army Pay Corps
A.P.D.	Army Pay Department
A.P.T.C.	Army Physical Training Corps
A.R.	Artist Rifles
A.S.C.	Army Service Corps (WW1)
A.S.C.M.T.	Army Service Corps (Motor Transport) – (WW1)
A.S.H.	Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders
A.T.S.	Auxiliary Territorial Service
A.V.C.	Army Veterinary Corps
A.Y.	Ayrshire Yeomanry
ANZAC	Australian & New Zealand Army Corps
Argylls	Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders
B.R.	Border Regiment

B.R.C.S.	British Red Cross Society
B.W.	Royal Highlanders (Black Watch)
B.W.I.R.	British West Indies Regiment
B.W.N.R.	Black Watch, National Reserve
C.C.	Canadian Contingent (Note: G.G. may look similar on memorials)
C.E.F.	Canadian Expeditionary Force
C.F.A.	Canadian Field Artillery
C.F.	Chaplain to the Forces
C.F.C.	Canadian Forestry Corps
C.G.	Coldstream Guards
C.G.C.	Canadian Grenadier Guards
C.H.	Cameron Highlanders
C.L.H.	Canadian Light Horse
C.L.Y.	City of London Yeomanry
C.M.P.	Corps of Military Police
C.M.R.	Canadian Mounted Rifles
C.M.R.S	Canadian Mounted Rifles
C.R.	Connaught Rangers (WW1)
Cam H.	Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders
Cam Hldrs	Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders
Cameronians	Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)
Cameron's	Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders
Can	Canadians
Can F.S.	Canadian Fire Service
D.C.L.I.	Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry
D.F.	Royal Dublin Fusiliers (WW1)
D.G.	Dragoon Guards
D.L.I.	Durham Light Infantry
D.W.R.	Duke of Wellington's Regiment
DoWtns	Duke of Wellington's Regiment
E.S.R.	East Surrey Regiment
E.Y.R.	East Yorkshire Regiment
F & F Yeo.	Fife & Forfar Yeomanry
F.A.A	Fleet Air Arm
F.A.N.Y.	First Aid Nursing Yeomanry
F.F.	Frontier Force (Indian Army)
F.M.S.V.F.	Federated Malay States Volunteer Force
G.G	Grenadier Guards (Note: C.C. may look similar on memorials)
G.H.	Gordon Highlanders
G.M.G.R.	Guards Machine Gun Regiment (WW1)
G.P.R.	Glider Pilot Regiment (WW2)
G.Y.	Queen's Own Royal Glasgow Yeomanry
Gord. Hldrs	Gordon Highlanders
Gordons	Gordon Highlanders
H.A.C.	Honourable Artillery Company
H.C.B.	Highland Cyclist Battalion (WW1)

H.G.	Home Guard (WW2)
H.K.V.D.C	Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps
H.L.I.	Highland Light Infantry
H.M.C.G.	His Majesty's Coast Guard
H.M.D.	His Majesty's Drifter
H.M.M.T.	His Majesty's Motor Transport
H.M.M.T.B.	His Majesty's Motor Torpedo Boat
H.M.M.L.	His Majesty's Motor Launch
H.M.P.M.S.	His Majesty's Paddle Mine Sweeper
H.M.S.	His Majesty's Ship
H.M.T.	His Majesty's Transport or His Majesty's Trawler
I.F	Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers
I.R.	Royal Irish Rifles or Royal Irish Regiment (WW1)
Ind.	Indian Army
K.A.R.	King's African Rifles
K.D.G.	Kings Dragoon Guards
K.E.H.	King Edwards Horse
K.O.S.B.	Kings Own Scottish Borderers
K.O.R.L.	King's Own (Royal Lancaster) Regiment
K.O.Y.L.I.	King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry
K.R.R.	Kings Royal Rifle Corps
K.R.R.C.	Kings Royal Rifle Corps
K.S.L.I.	King's Shropshire Light Infantry
L & B.H.	Lothian & Border Horse
L.A. Motor Battery	Light Armoured Motor Battery
L.D.V.	Local Defence Volunteer (Home Guard)
L.F.	Lancashire Fusiliers
L.G.	Life Guards
L.I.	Light Infantry
L.N.L.R.	Loyal North Lancashire Regiment
L.R.	London Regiment
L.S.	Lovat's Scouts or London Scottish
L.Y.	Lanarkshire Yeomanry
Lon. Scot.	London Scottish
Lond. R.	London Regiment
Lovats	Lovat's Scouts
M.F.A.	Mercantile Fleet Auxiliary
M.F.P.	Military Foot Police
M.G.C.	Machine Gun Corps
M.G.S.	Machine Gun Section
M.M.	Merchant Marine or Mercantile Marine
M.M.G.	Motor Machine Gun Corps
M.M.P.	Military Mounted Police
M.M.R.	Mercantile Marine Reserve
M.N.	Merchant Navy
M.N.B.D.O.	Mobile Naval Base Defence Organisation (WW2 Royal Marines)

M.P.	Military Police
M.T.	Motor Transport
M.T.B.	Motor Torpedo Boat
M.V.	Motor Vessel
N.A.A.F.I.	Navy, Army and Air Force Institute
N.C.B.	Northern Cyclist Battalion (based in Northumberland)
N.D.	Sherwood Foresters (Notts & Derby) Regiment
N.F.	Northumberland Fusiliers
N.Fus	Northumberland Fusiliers
N.F.S.	National Fire Service. Created in August 1941
N.I.H.	North Irish Horse
N.Z.	New Zealand
N.Z.E.F.	New Zealand Expeditionary Force
N.Z.I.F.	New Zealand Imperial Force
NYASld.V.R	Nyasaland Volunteer Reserve
O & B.L.I.	Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Light Infantry
O.C.	Ordnance Corps
O.T.C.	Officer Training Corps
P.P.C.L.I.	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
P.P.L.I. Canadians	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
Para.	Parachute Regiment
P.M.R.A.F.N.S	Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service
Q.A.I.M.N.S.	Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service
Q.A.I.M.N.S.R.	Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve
Q.A.R.A.N.C.	Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps
Q.A.R.N.N.S.	Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service
Q.M.A.A.C.	Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps
Q.O.C.H	Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders
Q.O.R.G.Y	Queen's Own Royal Glasgow Yeomanry
Q.R.R.	Queen's Royal [Surrey] Regiment
Q.W.S.	The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment)
R Hldrs	Royal Highlanders (Black Watch)
R.Innis.Fus.	Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers
R.A.	Royal Artillery
R.A.Ch. D	Royal Army Chaplains Department
R.A.A.F	Royal Australian Air Force
R.A.C.	Royal Armoured Corps
R.A.F.	Royal Air Force
R.A.F.V.R.	Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
R.A.M.C.	Royal Army Medical Corps
R.A.N.	Royal Australian Navy
R.A.O.C.	Royal Army Ordnance Corps
R.A.P.C.	Royal Army Pay Corps
R.A.R.	Royal Australian Regiment
R.A.S.C. (WW2)	Royal Army Service Corps (WW2)
R.A.V.C.	Royal Army Veterinary Corps

R.Aus.R.	Royal Australian Regiment
R.C.A.F.	Royal Canadian Air Force
R.C.D.	Royal Canadian Dragoons
R.C.N.	Royal Canadian Navy
R.C.N.V.R.	Royal Canadian Navy Volunteer Reserve
R.C.S.	Royal Corps of Signals
R.D.C.	Royal Defence Corps
R.D.F.	Royal Dublin Fusiliers (WW1)
R.D.Fus	Royal Dublin Fusiliers (WW1)
R.E.	Royal Engineers
R.E.F	Royal Enniskillen (sic) Fusiliers [actually Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers]
R.E.M.E.	Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
R.F.	Royal Fusiliers
R.F.A.	Royal Field Artillery (WW1)
R.F.C.	Royal Flying Corps
R.F.Corps	Royal Flying Corps
Rfm	Rifleman
R.F.R.	Royal Fleet Reserve
R.G.A.	Royal Garrison Artillery (WW1)
R.H.	Royal Highlanders (Black Watch)
R.H.A.	Royal Horse Artillery
R.H.G.	Royal Horse Guards
R.H.R.	Royal Highlanders (Black Watch)
R.I.F.	Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, or Royal Irish Fusiliers
R.I.N.	Royal Indian Navy
R.I.R.	Royal Irish Rifles or Royal Irish Regiment (WW1)
R.M.	Royal Marines
R.M.A.	Royal Marine Artillery
R.M.B.	Royal Marine Band
R.M.E.	Royal Marine Engineers
R.M.F.	Royal Munster Fusiliers (WW1)
R.M.L.I.	Royal Marine Light Infantry (WW1)
R.M.S.M.	Royal Marine Submarine Miners
R.N.	Royal Navy
R.N.A.S.	Royal Naval Air Service
R.N.C.V.R.	Royal Navy Canadian Volunteer Reserve
R.N.D.	Royal Naval Division
R.N.D.A.C.	Royal Naval Division Ammunition Column
R.N.F.	Royal Northumberland Fusiliers (WW2)
R.N.M.W.S.	Royal Navy Mine Watching Service
R.N.P.S.	Royal Naval Patrol Service (WW2)
R.N.R.	Royal Naval Reserve
R.N.R.T.	Royal Naval Reserve Trawler Section (WW1, forerunner of RNPS)
R.N.S.R.	Royal Naval Special Reserve
R.N.V.R.	Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve
R.O.C.	Royal Observer Corps (WW2)

R.R. OF CAV	Reserve Regiment of Cavalry
R.S.	Royal Scots
R.Scots	Royal Scots
R.S.F.	Royal Scots Fusiliers
R.S.Fus.	Royal Scots Fusiliers
R.T.R.	Royal Tank Regiment (WW2)
R.U.R.	Royal Ulster Rifles (WW2)
R.W.Kents	Royal West Kent Regiment
R.War.R.	Royal Warwickshire Regiment
Rif. Brig.	Rifle Brigade
S.A.E.	South African Engineers (Corps)
S.Af.E.F.	South African Forces [Expeditionary Force]
S.A.I.	South African Infantry
S.A.S.	South African Scottish (WW1)
S.A.S.	Special Air Service (WW2)
S.G.	Scots Guards
S.B.R.C.	Scottish Branch, British Red Cross
S.H.	Seaforth Highlanders or Scottish Horse
S.R.	Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)
S.S.	Steam Ship
S.S.R.	South Staffordshire Regiment
Sco. H.	Scottish Horse
Sco Hse	Scottish Horse
Sco Rif	Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)
Sco. Gds.	Scots Guards
Sea. H.	Seaforth Highlanders
Sea. Hldrs	Seaforth Highlanders
Seaforths	Seaforth Highlanders
T.A.	Territorial Army (WW2)
T.A.N.S.	Territorial Army Nursing Service
T.C.	Tank Corps (WW1)
T.F.	Territorial Force (WW1)
Tanks	Tank Corps (WW1)
V.A.D.	Voluntary Aid Detachment
W.A.A.F	Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WW2 - WRAF in WW1)
W.A.R.	West Africa Regiment
W.G.	Welsh Guards
W.I.R.	West India Regiment
W.L.A.	Women's Land Army
W.R.A.F	Women's Royal Air Force (WW1 - WAAF in WW2)
W.R.N.S	Women's Royal Naval Service
Y.L.R.	York and Lancaster Regiment
Y & L.R.	York and Lancaster Regiment
W.Y.R.	West Yorkshire Regiment
Yeo.	Yeomanry

Ranks



2 Lt	Second Lieutenant
2/Lt	Second Lieutenant
A.B.	Able-bodied Seaman
A.C.1	Aircraftman First Class
A.C.2	Aircraftman Second Class
A.G.	Air Gunner
C.P.O.	Chief Petty Officer
C.S.M.	Company Sergeant Major
Capt	Captain
Cpl	Corporal
D.H.	Deck Hand
Dmr	Drummer
Dvr	Driver
E.R.A	Engine Room Artificer
F. Lt	Flight Lieutenant
F.O.	Flying Officer
F.S.	Flight Sergeant
Fl. Lt	Flight Lieutenant
Fl. Off.	Flying Officer
Fus	Fusilier
Gdsm	Guardsman
Gnr	Gunner
L.A.C.	Leading Aircraftman
L.S.	Leading Seaman
L/Cpl	Lance Corporal
L/Sgt	Lance Sergeant
Ldg Smn	Leading Seaman
Lt.	Lieutenant
Lt. Col.	Lieutenant Colonel
Mjr.	Major
Mun Wkr	Munitions Worker
O.S.	Ordinary Seaman
Ord Smn	Ordinary Seaman
P.O.	Pilot Officer (RAF) or Petty Officer (Navy)
Pte	Private
Pvt.	Private
R.S.M.	Regimental Sergeant Major
S.S.	Shoeing Smith or Farrier
S/FM	Senior Fireman
Sgt	Sergeant
Sig	Signaller / Signalman
Signr	Signaller
Sjt	Serjeant
Smn	Seaman

Sq Ldr	Squadron Leader
Tpr.	Trooper
T.I.G.	Technical Instructor in Gunnery (Royal Artillery)
W.O.	Warrant Officer or Wireless Operator
W.Op.	Wireless Operator

Medals and Awards

A.F.C	Air Force Cross
C.B.E.	Commander of the Order of the British Empire
C.d.G.	Croix de Guerre
D.C.M.	Distinguished Conduct Medal
D.F.C.	Distinguished Flying Cross
D.F.M	Distinguished Flying Medal
D.S.C.	Distinguished Service Cross
D.S.M.	Distinguished Service Medal
D.S.O.	Distinguished Service Order
G.C.	George Cross
G.M.	George Medal
K.B.	Knight of the Bath
K.B.E.	Knight of the Order of the British Empire
K.C.B.	Knight Commander of the Bath
K.C.I.E.	Knight Commander of the Indian Empire
K.C.M.G.	Knight Commander of St. Michael & St. George
K.C.S.I.	Knight Commander of the Star of India
K.C.V.O.	Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order
K.G.	Knight of the Garter
K.T.	Knight of the Thistle
M.B.E.	Member of the Order of the British Empire
M.C.	Military Cross
M.M.	Military Medal
Med. Mil.	Medaille Militaire
O.B.E.	Officer of the Order of the British Empire
V.C.	Victoria Cross