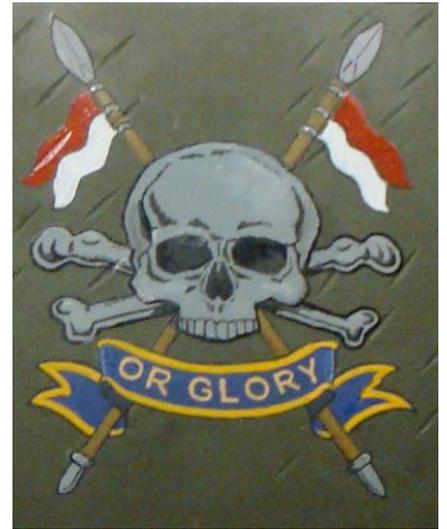


## The origin of the *Death or Glory* cap badge

The 47<sup>th</sup> Regiment, otherwise known as the 47<sup>th</sup> (Lancashire) Regiment of Foot was raised in Scotland in 1741 as Sir John Mordaunt's Regiment of Foot. The regiment took part in the successful attack at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham (Battle of Quebec) on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September 1759. At this battle the British forces, under General Wolfe, successfully assaulted and took the besieged French city of Quebec, which ultimately led to the capture of Montreal ending French control of Canada. A well-read man, Wolfe is said to have recited Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, containing the line "The paths of glory lead but to the grave," to his officers, adding: "Gentlemen, I would rather have written that poem than take Quebec tomorrow". In the final stages of the battle Wolfe was mortally wounded. Before he died Wolfe directed Colonel Hale, of the 47<sup>th</sup> Foot, to return to England with his final dispatches and news of the victory at Quebec.



As was normal in such cases, the King rewarded the harbinger of good news. Colonel Hale was given land in Canada and a commission to raise one of five new regiments of Light Dragoons. **The 17<sup>th</sup> Light Dragoons** were established in 1759 in Hale's home county of Hertfordshire. Still in mourning for General Wolfe, Hale chose for a badge the Death's Head with the motto 'Or Glory'. Following service in India in 1822, the Light Dragoons were re-designated in the role of lancers, the 17<sup>th</sup> Lancers. During home garrison duties the 17<sup>th</sup> earned the nickname 'Bingham's Dandies' on account of the lavish sums spent on horses and uniforms. In 1854, the 17<sup>th</sup> were in Russia where they formed the front rank as part of the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava. Of the 147 Lancers that charged, only 38 answered the roll call after the battle. For their actions that day, three Victoria Crosses were awarded to members of the Regiment. In 1876, with Prince George, Duke of Cambridge as colonel-in-chief, the regiment adopted the title of the **17th (The Duke of Cambridge's Own) Lancers**.

Having amalgamated in the spring of 1922, the **17<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> Lancers** quickly established their reputation. In 1927 the lance was finally abolished as a weapon in the British Army. In 1938 the regiment was mechanized. During the Second World War the regiment fought in North Africa and Italy. Later the 17<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> became part of NATO's front-line force in BAOR, West Germany. The regiment also served in Northern Ireland, both in mounted roles with Saladin, Saracen and Ferret armoured cars, and in dismounted roles as infantry. The 17<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> did not deploy as a regiment in Operation Granby in 1991, but furnished more than two squadrons of men, and most of its equipment, to reinforce the Royal Scots Dragoons Guards and the Queen's Royal Irish Hussars. The 17<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> Lancers Band were deployed in their wartime role as medics.

In 1991, after the first Gulf War, the Royal Armoured Corps was reduced from nineteen to eleven regiments. The fate of the 17<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> was to amalgamate with the 16<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Lancers; this was completed by June 1993 when they formed a new Regiment, called **The Queen's Royal Lancers**. This famous cap badge lives on today as that of the **Royal Lancers** (Queen Elizabeth's Own) who are the armoured cavalry regiment of 12 Armoured Infantry Brigade, one of the three Armoured Infantry Brigades of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division. This reconnaissance regiment was formed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 2015 from the amalgamation of the Queen's Royal Lancers and the 9<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales). The regimental museum is based at Thoresby Park, NG22 9EP, north of Nottingham.