



Hearts: The Supreme Sacrifice to Hearts at War 1914-1919

Tom Purdie

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In November 1914, Hearts led the Scottish First Division. However, a debate over the morality of continuing professional football while the war continued and a campaign in the newspapers to shame footballers into joining up meant that sixteen Hearts players joined the pals battalion being raised by Edinburgh politician Sir George McCrae. This unit, officially known as 16th Royal Scots, was the first to be described as a footballers' battalion.

On 1 July 1916, 15th and 16th Royal Scots attacked at the village of Contalmaison in the Somme Valley, today the site of a memorial to their dead. Four of the Hearts players died on 1 July; seven would die all told during the war.

In this book, Tom Purdie tells their story as well as what happened to the Hearts men left behind in Edinburgh.

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