

Research the internet and give me a comprehensive history of the fencibles. Expand on key people involved

The **Fencibles** were British regiments raised primarily in the United Kingdom, Isle of Man, and the colonies for defense against potential invasions. Their history spans several significant wars and periods, including the Seven Years' War, the American War of Independence, the French Revolutionary Wars, the Napoleonic Wars, and the War of 1812. Here's a comprehensive history of the Fencibles:

1. **Origin and Purpose:** The term "Fencibles" is derived from the word "defencible." These were usually temporary units, made up of local recruits and led by Regular Army officers. Their primary role was garrison and patrol duties, which allowed the Regular Army units to engage in offensive operations. Most Fencible regiments were not required to serve overseas. There were also naval forces known as "River Fencibles" and "Sea Fencibles."
2. **Early History:** The first Fencible regiments were raised in Scotland in 1759. In England, county militia regiments were established for internal defense, but Scotland was initially excluded due to concerns stemming from past rebellions. However, unlike the militia, which was raised by ballot, the Fencibles were recruited in the usual manner, and their officers were appointed by the king.
3. **Notable Engagements and Deployments:**
 - Some British Fencible regiments were deployed to Ireland during the Rebellion of 1798.
 - The 3rd Argyllshire Regiment and several others garrisoned Gibraltar.
 - The Dumbarton Fencibles Regiment served in Scotland, Guernsey, Ireland, and even escorted prisoners to Prussia.
 - The Ancient Irish Fencibles were deployed to Egypt in 1801.

4. **Highland Fencibles:** The Scottish Highlands provided numerous Fencible regiments from the mid-18th to late 18th century. Some of these regiments saw action during the Irish Rebellion of 1798, while others performed garrison and policing duties in various locations, including Britain, Ireland, the Channel Islands, and Gibraltar.
5. **American Revolutionary War:** The Royal Fencible Americans, a Loyalist unit, was raised by the British in Nova Scotia in 1775. They successfully defended against an attack by Patriot forces at the Battle of Fort Cumberland.
6. **War of 1812:** In the early 19th century, Fencible regiments were raised in the Canadas, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia. These regiments were primarily responsible for defense in North America. Following the War of 1812, these units were disbanded.
7. **Other Notable Fencible Units:**
 - **Bombay Fencibles:** Established in 1799, this regiment was raised from the inhabitants of Bombay, Salsette, and Caranjah.
 - **Royal Malta Fencible Regiment:** This regiment existed from 1815 to 1861, after which it became the Royal Malta Fencible Artillery.
 - **Royal New Zealand Fencible Corps:** Raised in 1847, they were sent to New Zealand to defend early settlers. They were settled around Auckland and played a role in the 1860s New Zealand Wars.

Key People:

- **Sir James Grant:** An engraved portrait of Sir James Grant is associated with the Strathspey Grant Fencibles.
- **Captain John Jermyn Symonds:** He was the second in command of Fencibles at Onehunga during the New Zealand Wars.