



# THE HIGHLAND CLANS

*Bruce Gray*



# The Highland Clans - Introduction

- The Highland Clans evolved primarily from Gaelic, Pictish, and Norse Viking cultures during the 1<sup>st</sup> millennia AD, and existed throughout the north and west of Scotland in the centuries between approximately 1200 and 1800.
- The historical Highland region of the clans comprises a little over 40% of Scotland's landmass and is characterized by a diversity of landscapes and environments. The clans reflected this diversity.
- Physical environment is harsh with the bulk of the land lying above 250 meters (820 ft), suitable only for rough grazing, with limited arable capacity
- Atlantic weather systems produce heavy amounts of rain, winter storms, and a constricted, unreliable growing season.
- Under such conditions, crop production was limited, with partial crop failures commonplace. Cattle rearing on less arable land was a vital source of food and wealth
- The harsh environment, meager resources, and geographic isolation promoted the development of self sufficient kindreds living in settlements, along with warlords and warrior elites that could guarantee security of farmers and herders in exchange for food, services, or military obligations
- These, along with their distinctive Gaelic language and culture, became the foundations of clan society



- The Scottish Highlands refers to a geographic and culturally distinct region in the northwest part of Scotland
- Highlands generally refers to the region to the north and west of the Highland Boundary Fault, which extends from Helensburgh in the west to Stonehaven in the east
- Flat coastal counties of Nairn, Moray, Banff, and Aberdeen in the northeast are excluded as they do not share the geographic and cultural features of the rest of the Highlands
- Geography is diverse ranging from fertile farmland around Kintyre and Cromarty Firth; dramatic seascapes on the west and north coasts; tall mountains and isolated glens; and the largest blanket peat bog in the world in Caithness and Sutherland.
- The Highlands is also home to many lochs, including Loch Ness, which is the largest by water volume in the UK, and Loch Morar which at 310 metres (1017 ft) is the deepest
- The Highlands is bisected by the *Glen Mor*, or Great Glen Fault that runs 62 miles from Inverness to Fort William, with the Grampian Mountains to the southeast and Northwest Highlands to the northwest
- The Great Glen Fault was a natural traveling route and was strategically important in controlling the Clans

# Scottish Highlands



# Highland Landscapes



Glencoe



Loch Morar, Lochaber



Machair & Beach  
North Uist



Glenlyon, Perthshire

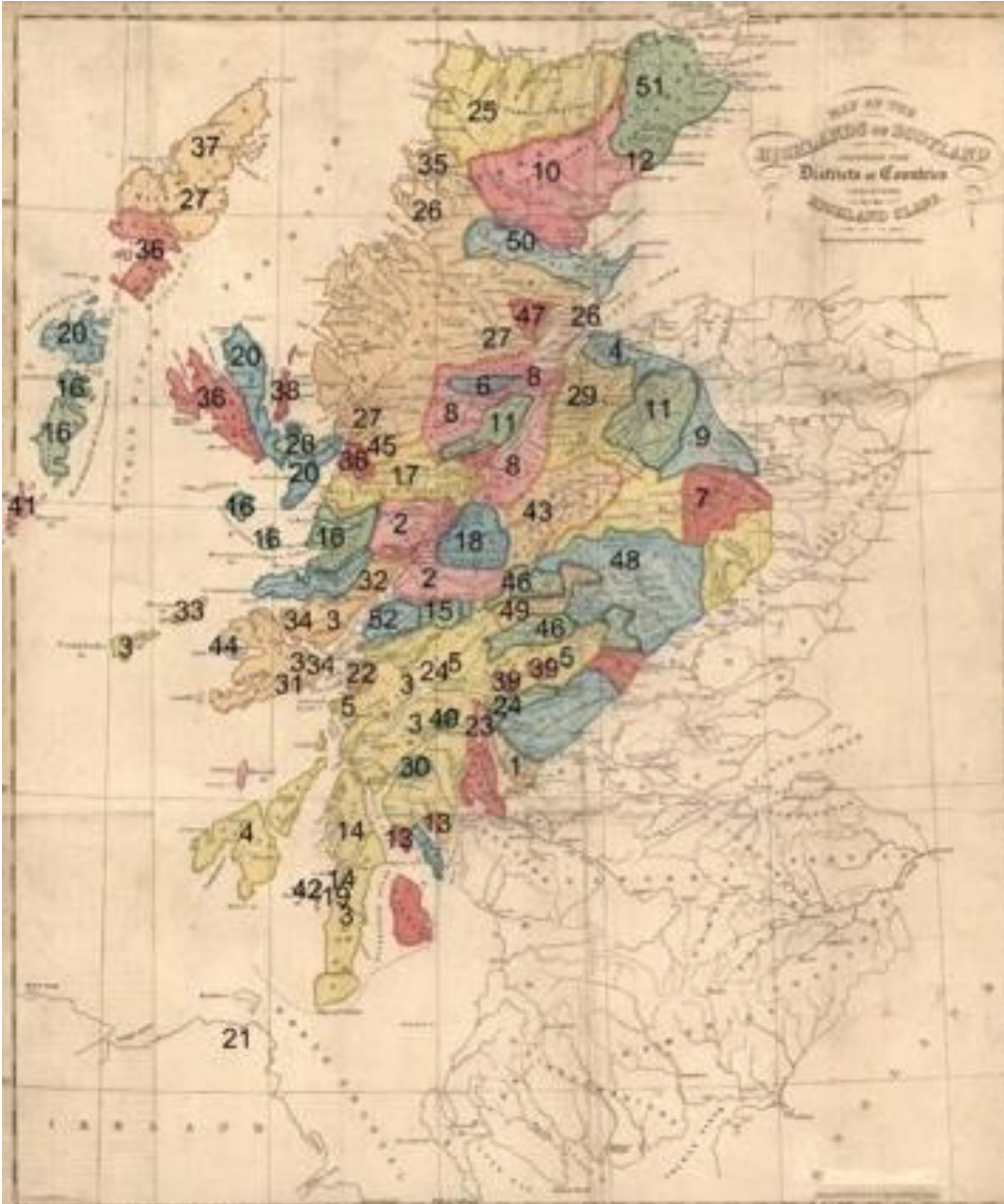


Farmland, Kintyre



“Flow Country” Peat Bog  
Caithness

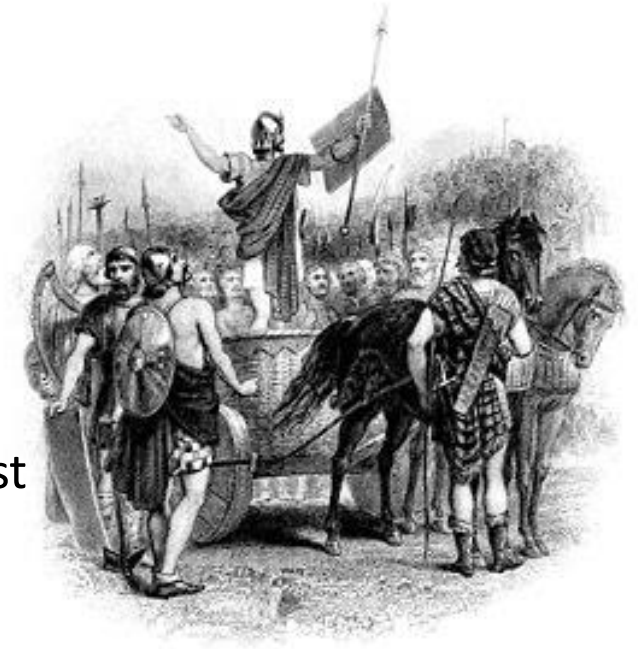
# The Major Highland Clans



1. Buchanan
2. Cameron
3. Campbell of Argyll
4. Campbell of Cawdor
5. Campbell of Glen Orchy (later Breadalbane)
6. Chisholm of Strathglass
7. Farquharson
8. Fraser of Lovat
9. Gordon
10. Gordons and Sutherlands of Sutherland
11. Grants
12. Gunns
13. Lamont
14. Macallister
15. Macdonald of Glencoe
16. Macdonald of Clanranald
17. Macdonald of Glengarry
18. Macdonald of Keppoch
19. Macdonald of Largie
20. Macdonald of Sleat
21. Macdonnell of Antrim  
(kindred of Clan Donald South)
22. Macdougall
23. Macfarlane
24. Macgregor
25. Mackay of Strathnaver
26. Mackenzie of Cromartie
27. Mackenzie of Kintail (later Seaforth)
28. Mackinnon
29. Mackintosh and Clan Chattan
30. Maclachlan
31. Maclaine of Lochbuie
32. Maclean of Ardgour
33. Maclean of Coll
34. Maclean of Duart
35. Macleod of Assynt
36. Macleod of Dunvegan and Harris
37. Macleod of Lewis
38. Macleod of Raasay
39. Macnabb
40. Macnaughton
41. Macneil of Barra
42. Macneil of Gig
43. Macpherson
44. Macquarrie
45. Macrae
46. Menzies
47. Munro
48. Murray of Atholl
49. Robertson of Struan
50. Ross
51. Sinclair of Caithness
52. Stewart of Appin

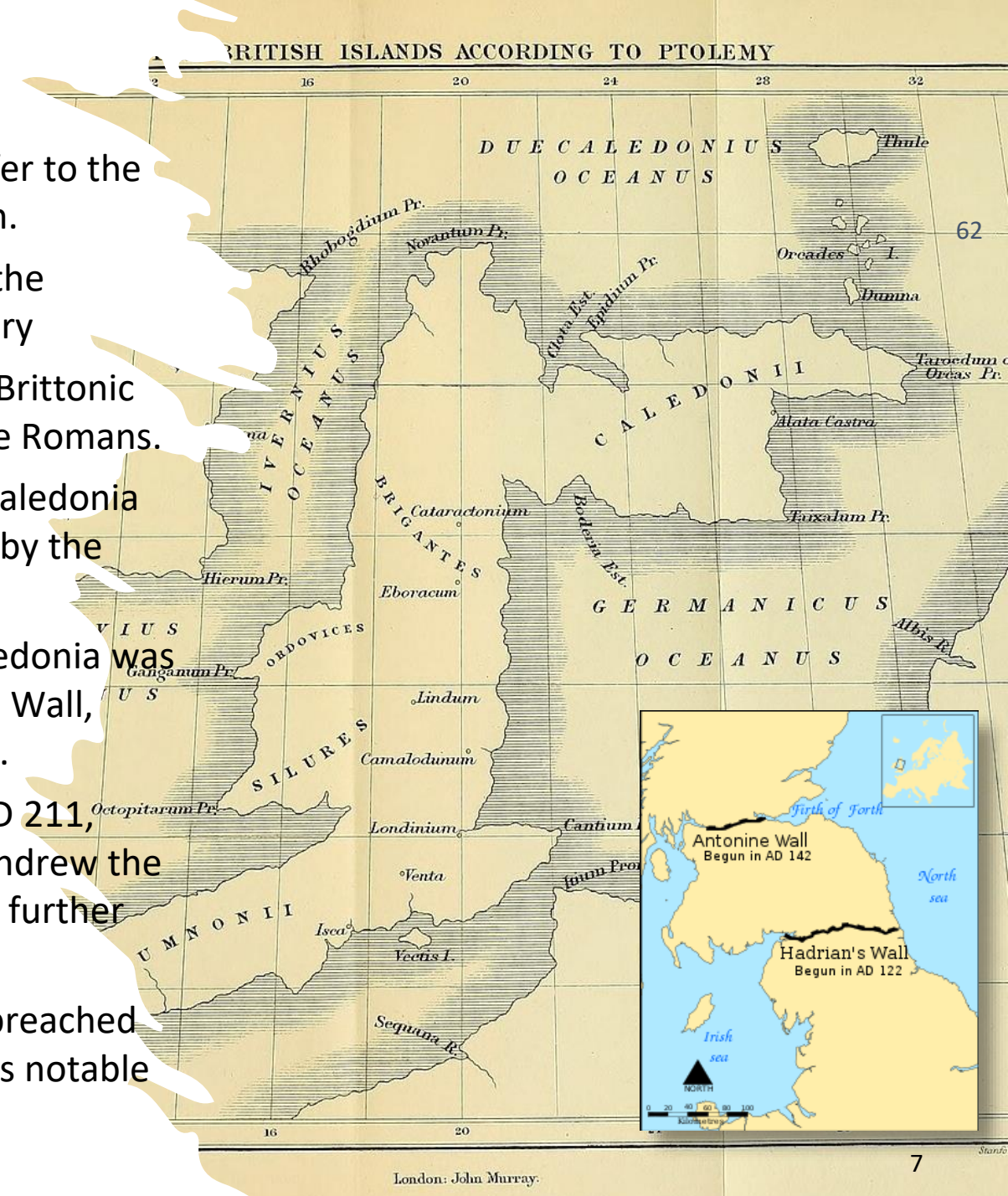
# Who was Calgacus?

- Calgacus (*CALG-ac-os*) was the first Scotsman to be given a name in recorded history. The name in Brittonic means *possessing a blade* or *swordsman*
- He was featured in Tacitus' *Agricola*, written c. AD 98 chronicling the Roman invasion and occupation of Britain during the first century
- Calgacus was a chieftain in the Caledonian Confederacy and led the battle against the Roman army led by Gnaeus Julius Agricola in a losing cause at the Battle of Mons Graupius, fought in northern Scotland around AD 84.
- Tacitus wrote a speech attributed to Calgacus, which was reportedly given to the Caledonian soldiers prior to the battle
- The speech describes the exploitation of Britain by Rome and rouses his troops to fight, arguing the Caledonians were the last of the free at the ends of the earth
- Tacitus also records in *Agricola* the first account of the "Highland Charge"
- The Caledonians were the last unconquered British tribe, and even though they were defeated by the Romans in the Battle of Mons Graupius, they were never fully subdued.
- At least not until 1746....



# Caledonia

- Caledonia was the Latin name used by the Roman Empire to refer to the part of Great Britain (Britannia) that lies north of the River Forth.
- The indigenous peoples of this region were called Caledonii by the Romans, which gave rise to the name Caledonia for their territory
- The Caledonii, or Caledonians, were a confederation of several Brittonic speaking tribes who fought, won, and lost many battles with the Romans.
- Ptolemy, in his cartographic works of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, showed Caledonia rotated to the east and delimited from the rest of Great Britain by the estuaries *Boderia* (Firth of Forth) and *Clota* (Firth of Clyde)
- The Romans never fully occupied Caledonia, and by AD 142 Caledonia was physically separated from the rest of the island by the Antonine Wall, which became the northern most frontier of the Roman Empire.
- Incursions continued on both sides of the Antonine wall until AD 211, when the Romans signed a treaty with the Caledonians and withdrew the frontier back to the Hadrian wall 100 miles south. There was no further historical mention of the Caledonians for nearly a century.
- In AD 296, Roman sources reported war bands from the north breached Hadrian's Wall and invaded the province of Britannia. What was notable about this account was the invading tribes were called 'Picts'



# The Picts

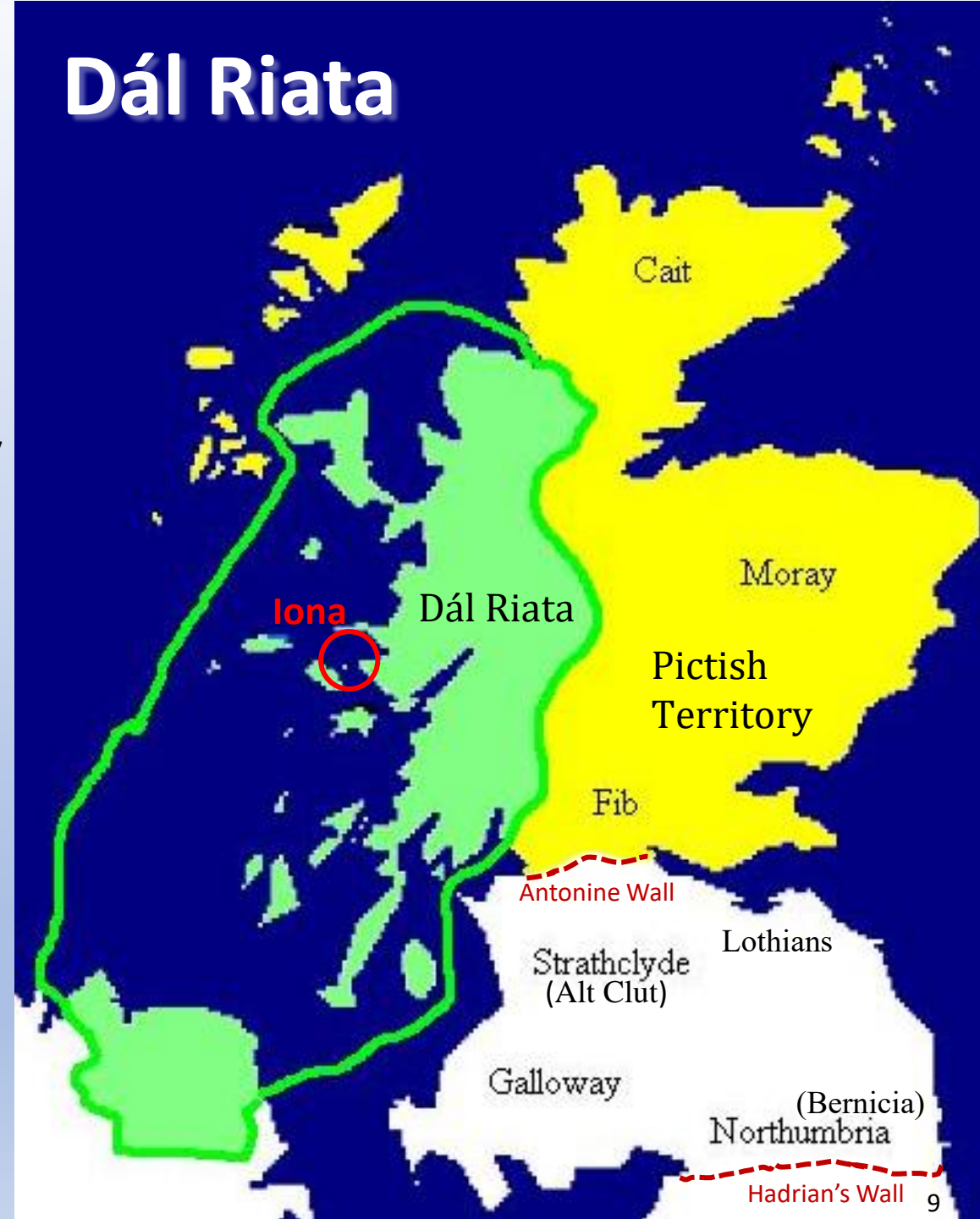


*Picts, 'Painted People'*

- By around the start of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, indigenous people of Caledonia were referred to as “Picts” by the Romans; Latin for “Painted”, because they painted their bodies.
- The Picts were a diverse, pre-literate, Celtic pagan society whose history and culture has been largely pieced together from Roman accounts and medieval ecclesiastical texts, as well as archaeological records (Pictish stones)
- According to Roman sources, the Picts were a fierce warlike people, and the only clothing the Picts wore in battle were iron chains around their waists and throats, with their bodies otherwise adorned head to toe with colored tattoos of various designs & animals
- Historians largely discount Roman narratives and believe the Picts were largely farmers that lived in relative peace. Their fierce commitment to their ancestral land likely motivated them to become fearsome protectors of it
- As with the Caledonians of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries, the Romans fought many battles with the Picts but were unable to subdue them
- By the 5<sup>th</sup> century, Gaelic speaking Christian missionaries from the west started moving into the Picts’ territory to spread the message of Jesus Christ.
- Pictish culture began to change as they became influenced by their Gaelic neighbors. The Pictish king converted to Christianity in the 6<sup>th</sup> century and by the 8<sup>th</sup> century the conversion of the Pictish people was complete

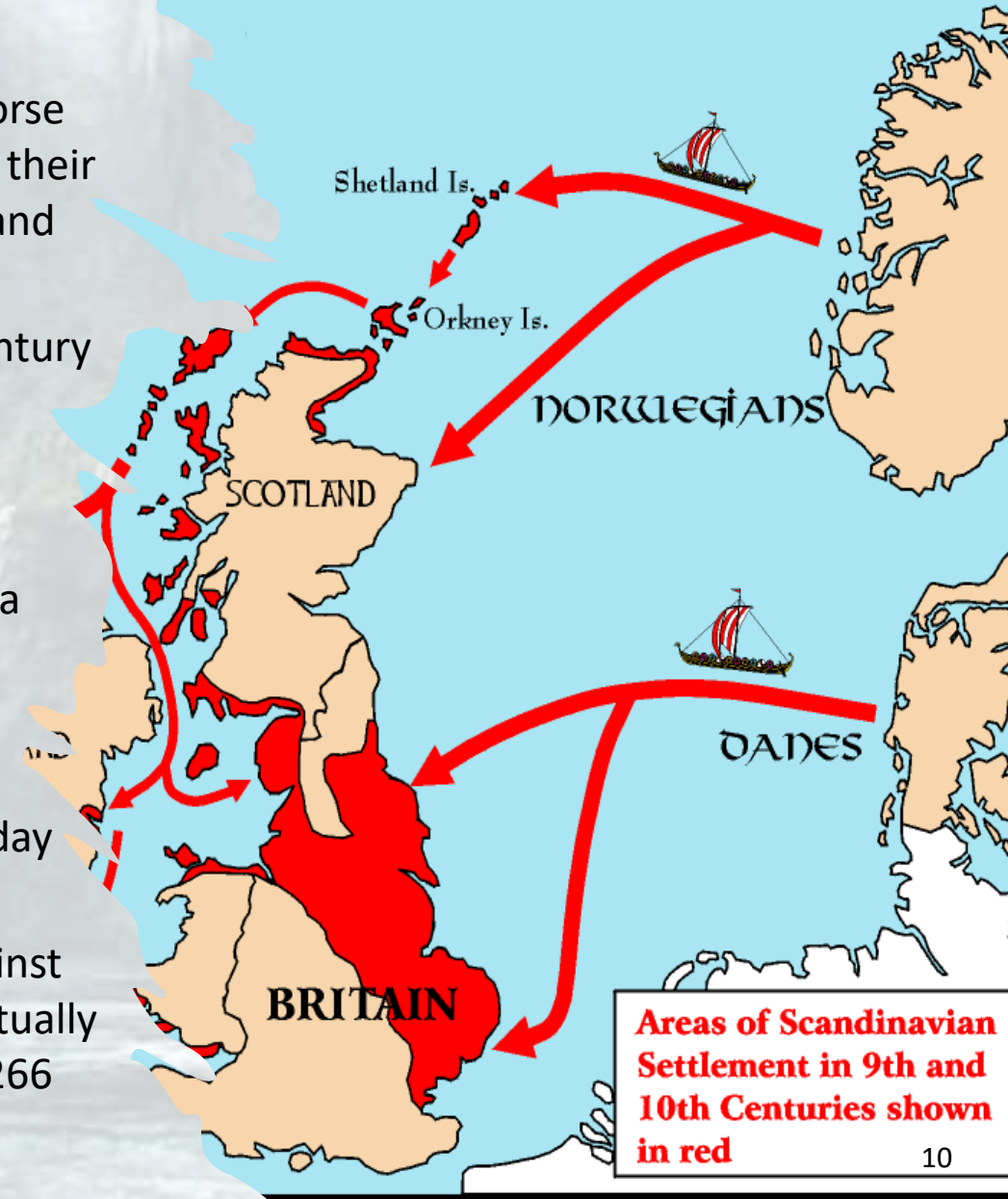
- For centuries before the end of Roman rule small communities of Gaelic speakers were living on Britannia's western coast. They were referred to as "Scoti" by the Latin speaking Romans
- During the 5<sup>th</sup> century after the Roman occupation ended, the Scots began to grow and expand throughout western Scotland where they formed the Gaelic Kingdom of Dál Riata in AD 498.
- Dál Riata was initially established in Argyll and expanded to most of western Scotland and inner Hebridean islands by the 6<sup>th</sup> century
- Dál Riata had a strong seafaring culture, which was tribal and piratic. During the 6<sup>th</sup> century they launched numerous naval expeditions in the region, including Orkney and Isle of Man
- Christian missionaries began to arrive in Dál Riata from Ireland in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and in AD 563, St. Columba arrived with 12 companions and established a Christian mission on Iona
- The Gaelic speaking missionaries spread Christianity within Dál Riata, as well as to the Picts and neighboring Brittonic tribes
- Several military defeats in the 7<sup>th</sup> century checked Dál Riata's expansion, and by 741 Dál Riata fell under Pictish overlordship.
- From 795 onward, Viking raids helped to weaken the Pictish kings leading to their overthrow by the King of Dál Riata, *Cináed MacAlpin* in 843

# Dál Riata



# The Vikings

- Scotland sits just over the North Sea from Scandinavia, which made it a prime entry point for Vikings entering the British Isles when they invaded in 793. The period of Vikings raids lasted nearly 300 years from 793– 1066 AD
- The violent raids took place on Scotland's coastline and Islands where Norse Vikings robbed precious resources from locals before eventually forming their own settlements. Danish Vikings established similar strongholds in England
- In 806 AD, a Viking raid on the Isle of Iona resulted in the deaths of 68 Christian Monks at the Iona Abbey, founded by St. Columba in the 6<sup>th</sup> century
- By the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century there were large scale settlements of Scandinavians in various parts of Britain, with the Scots ceding northern coastal regions and islands to the Norse Vikings
- The intermingling of native Gaelic speakers and Norse settlers produced a powerful Norse-Gael culture that had wide influence in Argyll, Galloway and the Northern Isles.
- Several Scottish clans have Norse-Gael roots including MacDonald, MacDougall, and MacLeod, and many Norse-Gaelic surnames survive today such as Doyle, MacIvor, MacAskill, MacAulay, and [Mac]Cotter
- In 1263 the Scots won a decisive battle at Largs on the Firth of Clyde against the Norwegians, which resulted in their complete retreat. Scotland eventually purchased the Hebrides Islands and Isle of Man in the Treaty of Perth, 1266



# Early Clan History

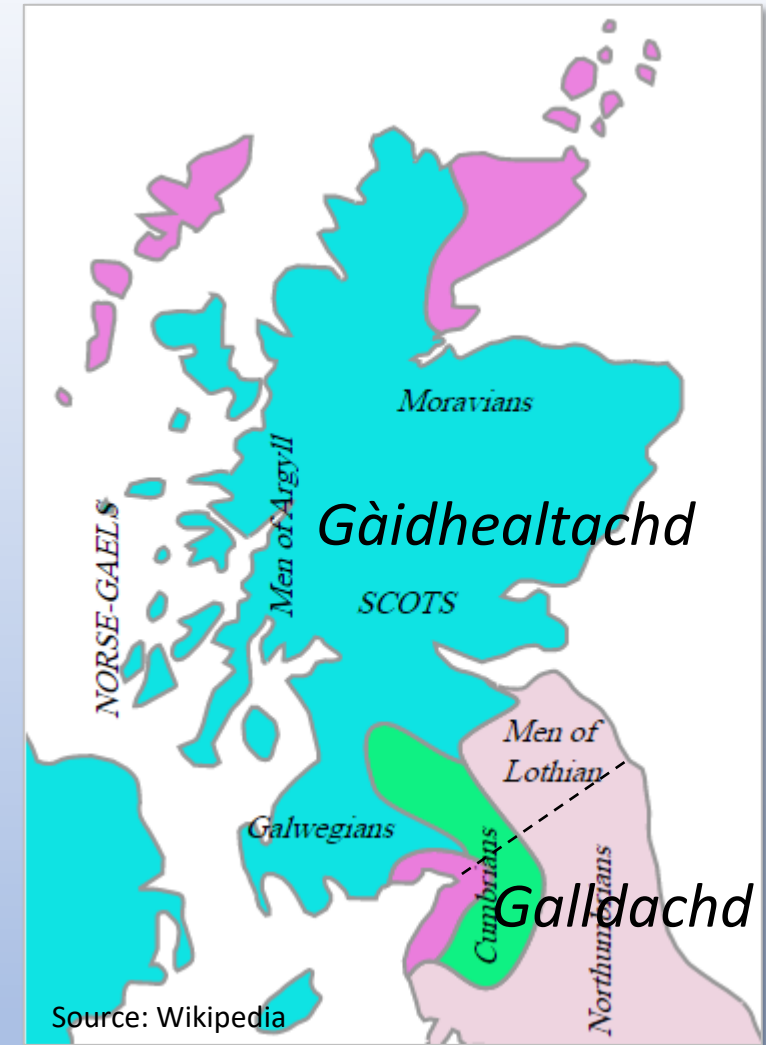
- *Cináed MacAlpin* (Kenneth I) inherited the throne of Dál Riata in 841 from his father *Alpin mac Echdach*, who was the founder of the Alpin dynasty, which lasted until the end of Malcolm II's reign in 1034
- Kenneth I conquered the kingdom of the Picts in 843, and began a 7-year campaign to seize all of Scotland and assimilate the Picts into a unified kingdom, which only later became known as *Alba* (Gaelic for Scotland: *AL-vá-ba*) under his grandson's, Constantine II, reign in 900 AD
- Over the ensuing 200 years, monarchies changed frequently due to war and assassination between competing royal lines within the House of Alpin. The kingdom was also under constant threat from Viking raids
- Against a backdrop of shifting and patchy royal control, and security concerns from the Vikings, local warlords became leaders of large kinship groups and clan territories began to evolve
- With support of strong warrior elites, warlords / chiefs could not only offer military leadership, but also act as law giver, judge, and protector
- The Highland geography of mountains, glens, sea lochs, and confined coastal flatlands created many isolated enclaves, encouraging local political development, independent of central royal control
- Rather than the result of some dramatic event in history, the rise of the Highland clans was a process of gradual evolution that occurred over several centuries



*Kenneth MacAlpin, by  
Jacob de Wet II, 1684-1686*

# Gaelic Society

- After the Picts converted to Christianity, Pictish language and culture was gradually displaced by Gaelic and by the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Pictish language and culture were essentially extinct.
- It was during this period that a recognizable clan system began to emerge within the Scots Gaelic speaking population
- Scots Gaelic is a Celtic language (q-Celtic) native to Scotland and is similar to, but distinct from, Irish. Both evolved from Middle Irish (900-1200 AD), but did not become distinct languages until the 13<sup>th</sup> century
- During the High and Late Middle Ages, Scotland was divided along language and cultural divisions, not geographic ones.
- Gaelic speaking areas of Scotland: *Gàidhealtachd*  
Non-Gaelic speaking areas: *Galldachd*.
- *Gàidhealtachd* existed as a distinctive cultural region within Scottish and later British kingdoms, which was often portrayed as geographically isolated, poverty stricken, disloyal, and barbarous.
- Such crude stereotypes failed to grasp the sophistication of the clans, their complex social hierarchy, and the uniqueness and beauty of their language, art, and song.

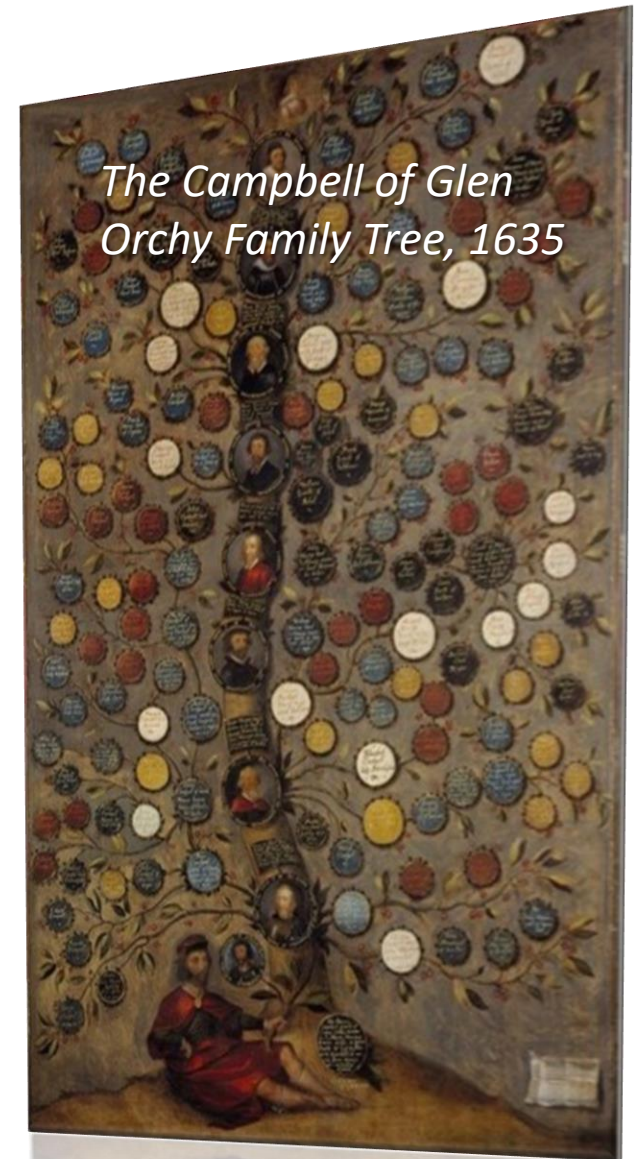


Legend:  Gaelic  English  Norse/Gaelic

**Gaelic vs. English Language Division in  
12<sup>th</sup> Century Scotland**

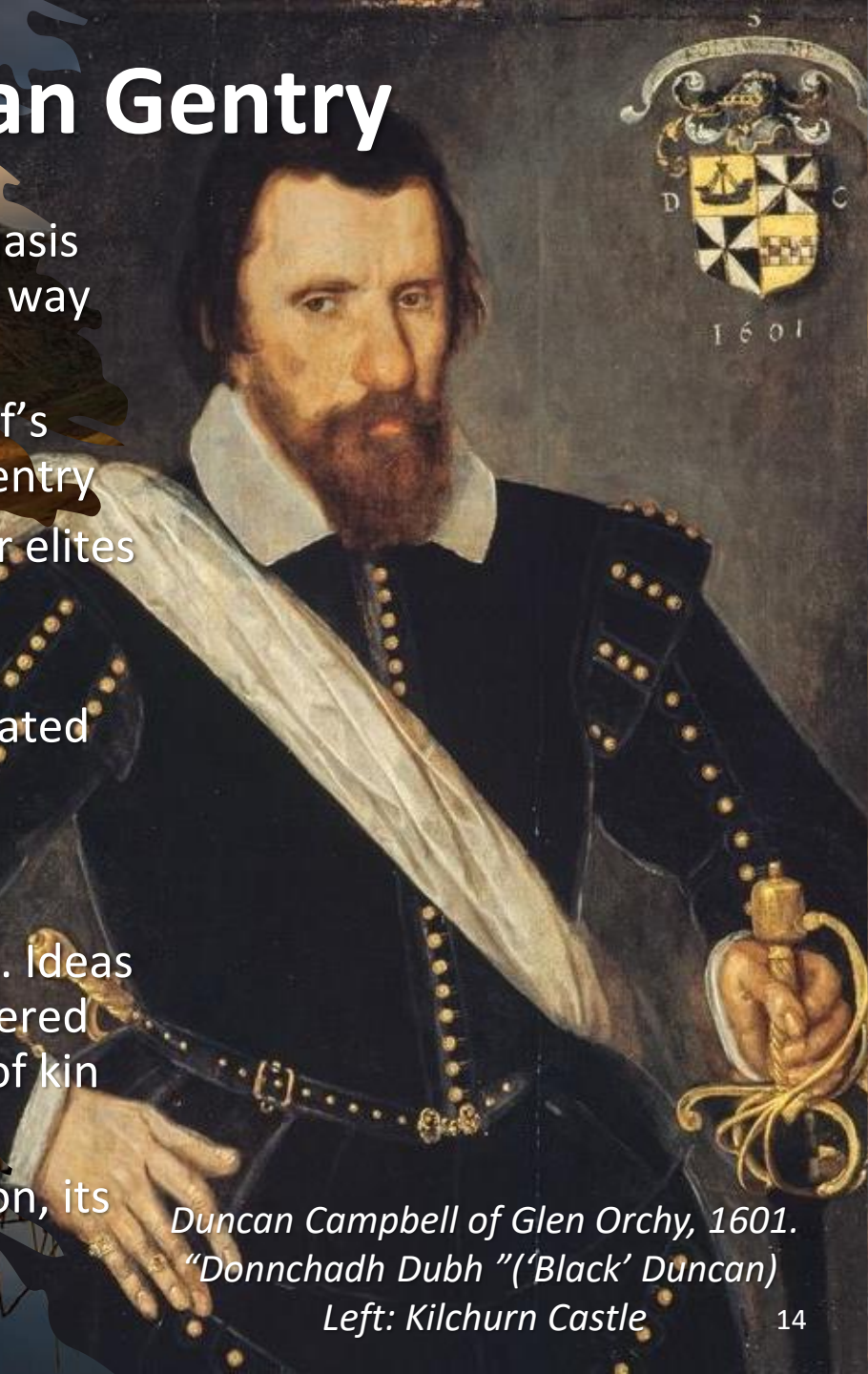
# What is Clanship?

- The word 'clan' is derived from the Scots Gaelic word, *clann* – meaning 'children'.
- The word 'children' brings to mind deep bonds of close personal affection, mutual loyalty, and of parental protection. It also creates images of a family renewing and extending itself through subsequent generations.
- Where there are children, there is a father, a head of the family whose role is to not only provide for offspring, but who also has a divine and socially approved authority over them. This power extends to expecting their obedience and disciplining his children if required
- These familial concepts shaped how Highland clans were imagined and understood as a form of social organization in Scottish Gaelic society.
- The father figure was of course the chief (in Gaelic, the *ceann-cinnidh* – 'head of the kin'). The chief and his family's power sprang from their genealogy, both real and fictionalized, that led back to a heroic ancestor.
- Imagining a clan's origins in this way gave it the basis for internal cohesion, but also the ability to replicate fresh branches, which could develop and expand into new lands and territories



# Clan Foundations: The Chiefs and Clan Gentry

- Notions of common family descent were balanced with a parallel emphasis on the chief as the direct embodiment of the founding ancestor. In this way power and prestige were focused on the chief and his family
- Beneath the chief were those with widely accepted kin links to the chief's family. These kinsmen were the *daoine-uaisle* (noble people) or clan gentry
- Together, the chief, his immediate family, the wider gentry, and warrior elites formed the *fine*. It was through the *fine* that the chiefs controlled and regulated the lives of ordinary people living on their lands
- Concepts of family heritage and common descent shaped this sophisticated social hierarchy; however, it did not mean all those within a given clan territory were directly related through family links, of even believed themselves to be
- Clans were, in fact, open-ended, inclusive, and adaptable communities. Ideas of direct family bonds were complemented with arrangements that offered material security and the possibility of a dignified life to a wider range of kin groups biologically unrelated to the *fine*
- Inclusion was possible by offering access to the clan's physical protection, its land, and its agricultural and maritime resources



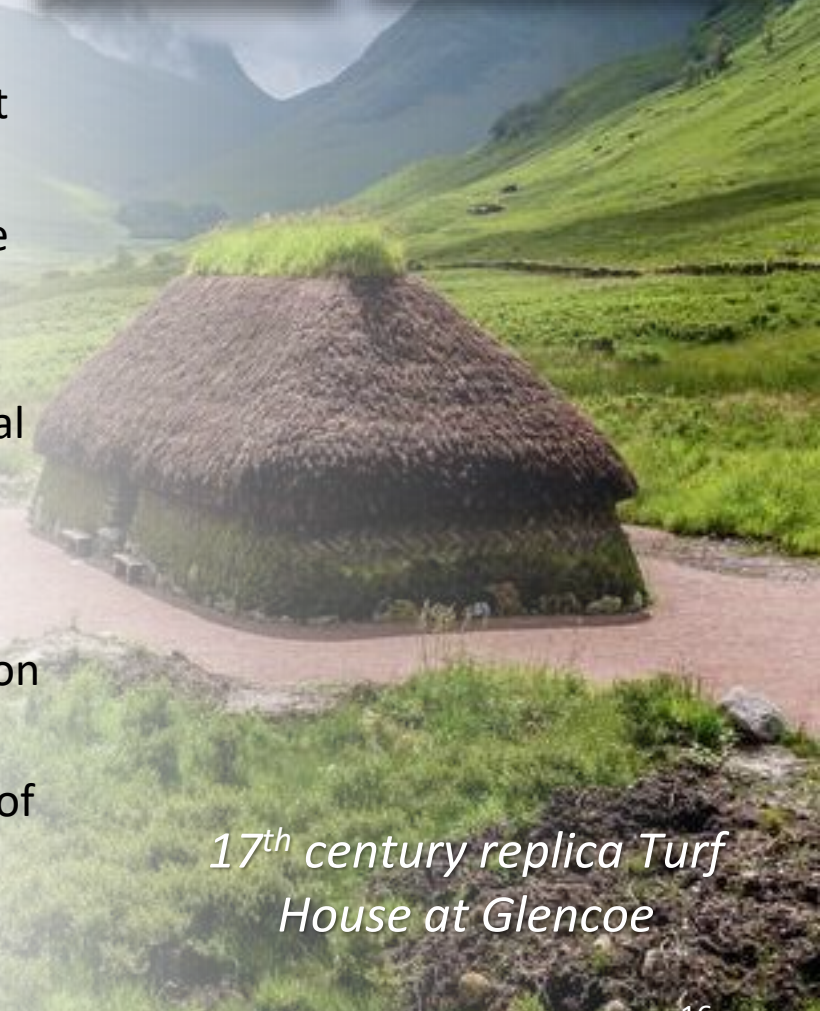
Duncan Campbell of Glen Orchy, 1601.  
"Donnchadh Dubh" ('Black' Duncan)  
Left: Kilchurn Castle

# *Dùthchas and Oighreachd*

- One of the main cohesive forces in clan society was in the crucial belief that the clan possessed a common resource base of farms and grazing land. Clan territory supplied food, cattle and sheep, while its glens, rivers, lochs, and seas offered wood, peat, and fish
- This sense of common resource was the clan's *dùthchas*, or its common heritage held in trust by the chief
- Principle role of the chief was the distribution and regulation of the *dùthchas* in a 'kindly' and appropriate way. This meant chieftains giving recognition to the needs and status of those living under their authority, and protecting and rewarding families that lived on and defended the *dùthchas*.
- While *dùthchas* formed the defining pillar of a cohesive clan society, it was not the only organizing principle. Central to a complete understanding of the clans is the concept known in Gaelic as *oighreachd*
- *Oighreachd* was the legal property rights of the chief over his land and over what his people could do on his land. Such rights of ownership – usually recognized officially by means of a feudal-style charter from the monarchs of Scotland – meant that clan chiefs were also landowners and landlords
- The chiefs had major administrative and law and order responsibilities. They formed an important part of the Scottish landed gentry and were expected to uphold the power of the monarch and enforce the kingdom's law

# Clan Economy and Society

- Farming lay at the heart of clanship with everyday existence organized around small township settlements of stone and turf-built thatched houses and byres (barns). These settlements were known as the *baile* (*clachan* in Ireland)
- Homes or “blackhouses” had few windows and burned open peat fires for warmth and cooking, which left interiors dark and smoky. Cattle and sheep were often kept at one end to shelter them in winter and provide extra warmth for occupants
- Each *baile* had areas of cultivable “in-bye” or infield land and larger areas of pasture or rough grazing. The in-bye was divided into strips, or run-rigs, which were assigned, and periodically reassigned, to the tenants of the *baile*
- The majority of the *baile* were rented by a *fir-tacsá*, or tacksman and sublet to actual farming tenants. Some tacksmen would have leases or *tacks* on several *bailtean*
- Tacksmen were key to the functioning of day to day living and the economy. They needed to be effective at organizing their farm townships and ensuring tenants managed their run-rigs lands and crop production effectively. They collected rents on behalf of the chief and were entitled to retain a portion of the rents for themselves
- Tacksmen also had military responsibilities and were expected to mobilize as much of the *baile*’s male population as possible when called on by the chief
- Tacksmen generally claimed direct lineage to the the clan chief’s family and were considered part of the clan’s *daoine-uaisle*



*17<sup>th</sup> century replica Turf House at Glencoe*

# Music, Song & Poetry

- From the 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, music and song were central to a clan's identity and unity, in times of both strife and celebration
- Music could be used to incite at a time of battle, to mark the end of a feud, or praise a clan chief in life and in death
- The music of the clans, manifested through either bagpiping, harp playing, or Gaelic song, was an indicator of the esteem, prestige, and status in which the chief and the *fine* were held
- Gaelic song texts are also an important source of information on the role of music in clan societies. The songs, as well as poetry, give a picture of how the clan chiefs lived and what sort of society they ruled over
- Most clans were patrons of classically trained Gaelic bards, whose role was composing eulogies, elegies, praise poetry, and occasional satire for the amusement of the chief
- Clan chiefs typically had personal pipers, as piping played an integral role as a cultural marker for warfare, politics, and the status of the clans. Piping was used to rouse the troops for battle, in celebration of clan victories, as well as laments for fallen heroes
- The clans were important patrons of Gaelic art and culture, and music was an integral part of the cultural life of a clan



*Piper to the Laird of Grant*  
Richard Waite, 1714

# *Smeòrach Chlann Dòmhnail* *(The Mavis of Clan Donald)*

*John MacCodrum*



Julie Fowlis



*Mavis – Song Thrush*

Hoilibheag hilibheag hò-aill-il ò,  
Hoilibheag hilibheag hò-rò ì,  
Hoilibheag hilibheag hò-aill-il ò,  
Smeòrach le Clann Dòmhnail mì.

## *Chorus*

Hoilibheag hilibheag hò-aill-il ò,  
Hoilibheag hilibheag hò-rò ì,  
Hoilibheag hilibheag hò-aill-il ò,  
A thrush of Clan Donald am I.

Smeòrach mis' air ùrlar Phaibil  
Crùbadh ann an dùsal cadail,  
Gun deòrachd a thèid na 's fhaide,  
Truimid mo bhròn, thòirleum m' aigne.

A mavis I on Paible's flatland,  
Huddled in a drowse of sleep,  
Unwilling to go any further  
In the depths of my sorrow my spirit made a mighty leap.

Smeòrach mis' air mullach beinne  
'G amharc grèin' is speuran soilleir;  
Thig mi stòlda chòir na coille -  
Bidh mi beò air treòdas eile.

A mavis I on a mountain top,  
Watching sun and cloudless skies;  
Softly I approach the forest -  
I shall live on other sustenance.

Ma mholas gach eun a thìr fèin  
Cuim thar èis nach moladh mise  
Tìr nan curaidh, tìr nan cliar,  
An tìr bhiadhchar, fhialaidh mhiosail?

If every bird praises its own land  
Why then should not I?  
Land of heroes, land of poets  
The abundant, hospitable, estimable land.

'N tìr nach caol ri cois na mara,  
An tìr ghaolach, chaomhnach, channach,  
An tìr laoghach, uanach, mheannach:  
Tìr an arain, bhainneach, mhealach.

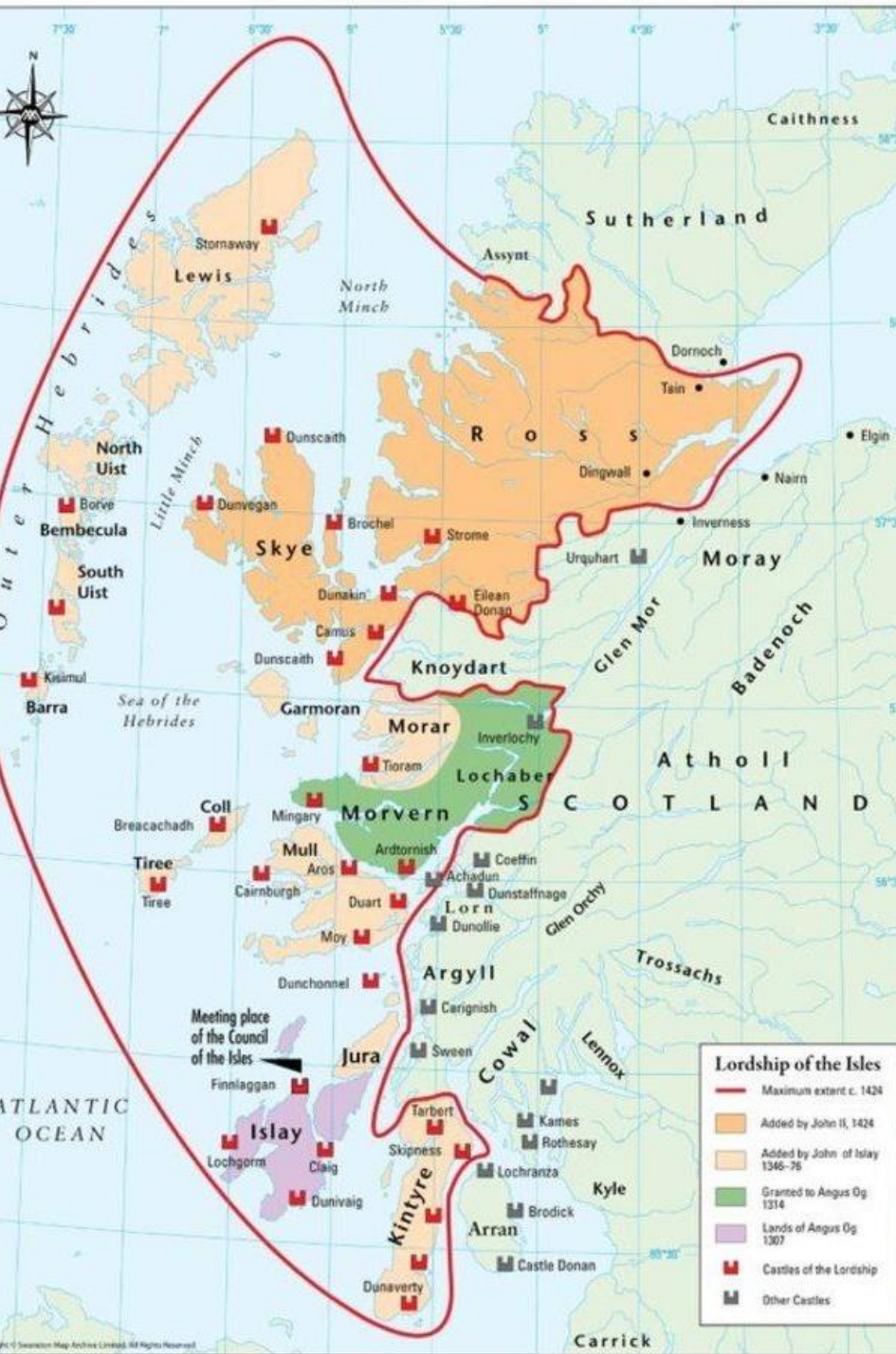
The land not narrow near the sea,  
The delectable, mild, comely land,  
The land of calves and lambs and kids,  
The land of bread and milk and honey.

An Cladh Chomhghain mise rugadh,  
'N Àird an Rùnair fhuair mi togail,  
Fradharc a' chuain uaibhrich chuislich,  
Nan stuagh guanach cluaineach cluiceach.

In Comgan's Churchyard I was born,  
In Àird an Runnair I was reared,  
In sight of the proud throbbing sea,  
Of the sportive, fickle, playful waves.

Measg Chlann Dòmhnail fhuair mi m' altrum -  
Buidheann nan seòl 's nan sròl daithe,  
Nan long luath air chuantaibh farsaing,  
Aiteam nach ciùin rùsgadh ghlaslann.

Among Clan Donald I was nursed,  
They of of sails and coloured banners  
Of swift ships on wide seas  
A people not mild when baring grey blades.



# The Lord of the Isles

- From the late 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Clan Donald rose to dominate the Inner and Outer Hebrides and western Highlands
- Successive Clan Donald chiefs became known as Lord of the Isles, and from their power base on Islay, they issued laws and regulated subordinate clans, and presided over a flourishing of classical Gaelic learning and art.
- Clan Donald sought to extend their territories in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, which led to warfare along the eastern frontier of the Highlands, including battles of Harlaw near Aberdeen in 1411, and the burning of Inverness in 1429. This led to ongoing conflict with the Stewart Kings.
- Growing tensions within Clan Donald allowed successive Steward Kings of Scots to exploit these divisions, while rallying rival clans, such as the Campbells of Argyll and the Clan Chattan, to their cause
- In 1476 King James III ordered forfeiture of lands belonging to Lord John of the Isles. Although later returned to him, further internal dissension between John and his heir apparent (*Tànaistear*), Young Angus, ruptured clan cohesion
- Civil war ensued and political and military instability spread across *Gàidhealtachd* as key western clans backed Lord John, while major branches of Clan Donald backed Angus
- The growing failure to keep peace and stability led King James IV in 1493 to order the final forfeiture of the Lordship

# Clan Feuds

*“Forgive your enemies, but remember the bastard’s name”\**

- Feuds have long been associated with Scottish Highlanders and Islanders, especially in the period known in Gaelic tradition as *Linn nan Creach* (the ‘Age of Forays’), which followed the forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles in 1493
- The 16<sup>th</sup> century saw a period of weak central royal government, which resulted in increased lawlessness by the clans and disregard for distant authority
- Many of the Highland confrontations that took place between 1493 and 1545 were attempts to restore the McDonald Lordship. The era between the death of the last claimant to the Lordship, *Dòmhnall Dubh* in 1545 and the death of James VI in 1625 saw feuding in the Highlands reach unprecedented levels
- Feud was not confined to Gaelic Scotland. It occurred throughout the kingdom until the reign of James VI. Feud’s prevalence fluctuated over time. Before 1493 and the forfeiture of the Macdonald Lord of the Isles, conflict was less evident in the Highland territories they effectively governed.
- While clan honor was a factor, the cause of most feuds concerned right: the right to rule as chief, and the right to land. Primogeniture had not fully taken hold in the Highlands during this period and succession disputes had the potential to pull in wider conflicts. Feuds over land mostly arose when one clan was in possession of land but lacked legal title.
- The *creach* or cattle raid so characteristic of clan feud meant more than casual brigandry or economic survival. Livestock represented power and wealth and was fair game among rival clans. Successful cattle raids were also means for clansmen to demonstrate strength, cunning, and fearlessness; valued qualities in a Highland warrior.
- Central government and Scots law of the time could either foment feud, as well as defuse it. Most clan feuds were settled by clan society’s own tried and tested mechanisms such as arbitration, compensation, and exchange of hostages

*\*Old Scottish proverb*

# Highland Clan Weaponry



Claymore, 16th  
Century



Sgian-dubh



Targe, Belonging to Charles  
Edward Stuart, 1745

Highland Dirk, c. 1795



Basket Hilt Sword  
c. 1735



Lochaber Axe



# Famous Clan Feuds & Battles

- ❖ **Macpherson and Davidson** (Clan Chattan) – Battle of the Clans, Perth, 1396
- ❖ **Macdonald (Lord John) and Macdonald (Angus Og)** – Battle of Bloody Bay, Tobermory, Mull c.1481
- ❖ **Macleod and Macdonald** – The Eigg Massacre, Isle of Eigg, 1577; Battle of the Spoiling Dike, Isle of Skye, 1578
- ❖ **Campbell and MacGregor** – Western Highlands, 16<sup>th</sup> century
- ❖ **MacGregors and Colquhoun** – Battle of Glenfruin, Argyll, 1603
- ❖ **Campbell and Macdonald** – Massacre of Glencoe, 1692



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# Royal Conflict

- The ongoing violence from the clan feuds, as well as Macdonald ambitions for a restoration of the Lordship of the Isles, increased the cultural and political divergence between *Gàidhealtachd* and *Galldachd* during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Gaelic society had come to be regarded as backward and barbarous.
- Efforts by the Steward monarchs to impose tighter control over the Highlands and Islands in the century following the forfeiture of the Macdonald Lordship (1493) were hampered by a lack of continuity and long periods of weak regency.
- Lowland society in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was feudal with strong kinship influence, whereas the Highlands, in contrast, had kinship and clanship as the dominant social structure, with succession of many clan chiefs still determined by tanistry.
- Unlike the Highlands, the Lowlands had many recognized civic structures such as courts, burghs, councils, parliament, and sheriffs, which organized civil society. The language of civility was Scots not Gaelic
- The reach of Lowland power structures was limited by geography and the bonds of clanship. Lowlanders were often powerless to impose any sort of civil legal actions against the clans
- When the Privy Council of Scotland wished to take direct action against a clan or a clan member it issued a "Commission of Fire and Sword". This licensed a neighboring clan to pursue offenders with all severity.



*Tarbert Castle, Argyll,  
captured by James IV  
from John MacDonald of  
Islay, Lord of Isles in  
1494*

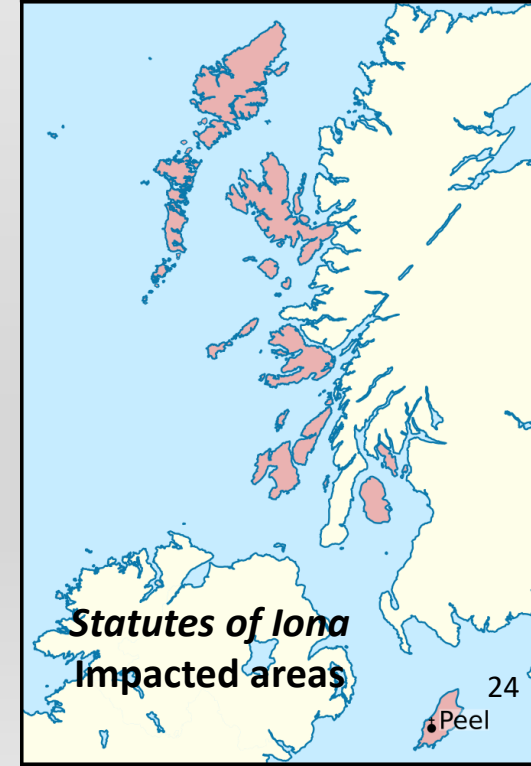
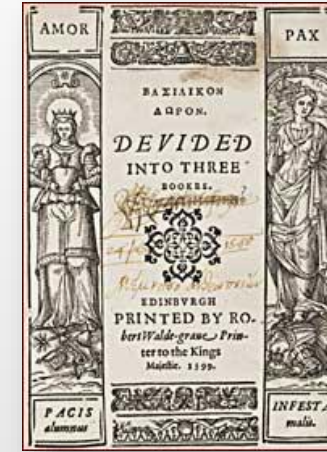


# “Civilizing” the Clans

- The long-standing efforts by the Stewart Kings to impose tighter controls on the clans reached an apex after James VI came of age and took full control of the Scottish throne in 1587
- In 1597 James VI wrote his political manifesto, *Basilikon Doron*, where he described 2 types of Highlander: barbarous but capable of reform; or ‘all-utterly’ barbarous and beyond redemption.

## Key Actions

- ✓ Outlawed tanistry and forced many of the Highland chiefs to make frequent court visits in Edinburgh to prevent them from plotting against him
- ✓ Held Clan Chiefs personally accountable for their follower's behavior under pain of heavy fines and legal proceedings
- ✓ **Instituted ‘Plantations’** – planting of Lowland colonies among the Highland clans to reform and civilize those so inclined and root out and remove the more stubborn type
- ✓ **Statutes of Iona 1609** – restricted the carrying of pistols and muskets and sale and importation of wine & whisky, banned traveling bards, and compelled eldest child of clan chiefs and gentry (owners of > 60 head of cattle) to be educated in the Lowlands.
- ✓ **Education Act of 1616** - classified Gaelic as an “Irish language” and principal cause of barbarity and incivility in the Highlands and prohibited it from being taught in schools
- ✓ He declared bearing the surname “Macgregor” a capital crime to subdue one of the more troublesome and “irredeemable” clans.




# The Wars of Three Kingdoms

*Charles I in Three Positions*  
(Anthony van Dyck 1636)

- The Wars of the Three Kingdoms, (aka British Civil Wars) were a series of interrelated conflicts fought between 1639 and 1653 in the kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, then separate political entities united in a personal union under Charles I, second son and successor to James VI and I
- At its core, the conflict arose out of political and religious disputes over the role of the monarchy, with Royalists arguing that political and religious bodies were subordinate to the king, while their Parliamentary opponents backed a limited form of constitutional monarchy and opposed the autocratic rule of Charles I
- Tipping point in Scotland was the imposition of the Book of Common Prayer by Charles I in 1637, which was greeted with rioting in Edinburgh, followed by drafting of the National Covenant in 1638. Violent conflict began in 1639 when Scottish Covenanters who opposed Charles' religious reforms gained control of Scotland and briefly occupied northern England.
- Royalism was prominent in the Highlands due to a mix of religious, cultural, and political reasons. The Clans were still largely outside of the control of the Scottish Government, and many preferred the more distant authority of King Charles to the powerful and well-organized Lowland based government of the Covenanters.
- Clan politics and feuds also played a role; when the Presbyterian Clan Campbell chief sided with the Covenanters, their rivals automatically took the opposing side. The MacDonalds were Catholics and sworn enemies of the Campbells and so sided with the Scottish Royalists and backed King Charles.
- Charles I ultimately surrendered to the Scottish Covenanter army in England in 1646, however, the Royalists and Covenanters failed to reach an accommodation that would achieve peace and preserve the crown. Further divisions within Parliament led to Charles I being executed for treason in 1649 and the start of a 2<sup>nd</sup> civil war.
- Charles II, son of Charles I, assumed the throne in 1649 but fled to France in 1651 after his defeat by Oliver Cromwell, who supported a Republican government. Cromwell died in 1658, which later led to Charles II restoration in 1660

# Jacobitism

- After Charles II death in February of 1685, he was succeeded by his brother James VII and II, who had converted to Catholicism while exiled in France
- Despite being Catholic, James had widespread support from the Protestant majority in England and Scotland, since many feared his exclusion would bring about another civil war
- His Catholicism was seen as a temporary problem, as his heir apparent was his elder Protestant daughter Mary
- James soon lost popularity, and the birth of a male heir in 1688, James Francis Edward, displacing Mary, created the prospect of a Catholic dynasty
- In 1688, James II was deposed and exiled to France during *The Glorious Revolution*, and was replaced by his Protestant daughter Mary II, and her husband William III
- Highland clans that had earlier supported the royalist cause, remained loyal to James II and his son, and sought to restore the Stuarts to the throne. They later became known as *Jacobites* (Latin for supporters of James)
- War soon broke out in 1689 and despite a resounding victory by the Jacobite army at Killiecrankie, a third of their army was lost along with their leader Viscount Dundee, thwarting any further advances
- Jacobite rebels made 5 unsuccessful attempts over 57 years (1689-1746) to restore the exiled Stuarts to the throne, with the final attempt culminating in the 1745 uprising.

A portrait of James VII and II, a man with long, curly brown hair, wearing a grey coat with a white cravat and a red sash. He is seated and looking slightly to the left.

*James VII and II*  
*(1603-1701)*

# Jacobite Uprisings

*White Cockade*



Year of Uprising:	1689	1708	1715	1719	1745
Reigning Monarch	William III/Mary II	Anne	George I	George I	George II
Stuart Monarch	James II & VII	James Francis Edward	James Francis Edward	James Francis Edward	James Francis Edward
Leading Event	Deposition of James II	Acts of Union 1707	Succession of George Elector of Hanover	1716 French Anglo Treaty	Overseas wars and political conflict
Jacobite Leaders	Viscount Dundee	Claude de Forbin	J. Erskine Earl of Mar Earl of Strathmore William Mackintosh	George Keith William Murray William Mackenzie	Charles Stuart George Murray John O'Sullivan
Government Leaders	Hugh Mackay	George Byng	Duke of Argyll Charles Willis	Joseph Wightman	Duke of Cumberland John Cope George Wade Duncan Forbes
Key Battles	Killiecrankie Dunkeld Massacre of Glencoe	None (Unsuccessful French Naval Invasion)	Sheriffmuir Preston (England)	Capture of Eilean Donan Castle Glen Shiel	Prestonpans Falkirk Muir Culloden
Ended	1792	1708	1716	1719	1746
Jacobite Casualties Gov. Casualties	1500-2000 2000-2500	None	800 900	100 141	1700-2250 1000-1200

# Massacre of Glencoe - 13 February 1692

- After the Jacobite uprising of 1689, the British government worried about allegiances of the western clans (except Campbells)
- In August 1691 the government offered indemnity to all clan chiefs who took an oath of allegiance to William before January 1, 1692. All but one chief took the oath by the deadline.
- Alistair Maclain, Chief of Clan Macdonald of Glencoe postponed his submission until December 31, 1691, and was unable to take his oath until January 6 because there was no magistrate at Fort William to receive it, and had to travel 3 days south to Inverurie
- Since Maclain failed to meet the deadline, Sir John Dalrymple, William's secretary of state for Scotland, issued an order under the king's signature for military punishment of the MacDonalds
- On February 1, Robert Campbell of Glenlyon led a company of British soldiers, several whom happened to be Campbell clansman, into Glencoe. Since the MacDonalds had not yet paid their taxes to the crown, troops could be billeted in their houses without compensation. They enjoyed Macdonald hospitality for 12 days
- On the evening of the 12<sup>th</sup>, Robert Campbell received his orders, from Major Robert Duncanson, and at dawn on the 13<sup>th</sup> day, the killing began. Maclain, his wife, and 2 younger sons throats were cut, and another 34 MacDonalds were slaughtered. Many who were able to escape perished later in the snow due to exposure



*Massacre of Glencoe*, by James Hamilton (1883-86)

# Jacobite Rising of 1715

- The first Jacobite rebellion of 1689 did not formally end until after the Massacre of Glencoe in 1692; however, despite signing allegiance to William, many clan chiefs remained loyal to James II
- In 1701 the Act of Settlement was passed which excluded Catholics from the throne, including James' son, James Francis Edward Stuart. The act named Charles I granddaughter, Anne followed by her distant relative Sophia of Hanover, both Protestants, as next in line.
- Anne and Sophia's deaths in 1714 led to Sophia's son George I, Elector of Hanover, as heir to the throne. John Erskine, Earl of Mar and Queen Anne's Secretary of State for Scotland was originally a supporter of the Hanoverian monarch, but became disaffected when George I dismissed him.
- Furious, the Earl of Mar returned to Scotland and raised the Stuart standard in 1715. In the summer of 1715, James Stuart (*the Pretender*), now 27, sent a letter from France to the Earl and asked him to raise an army of clansmen without delay.
- Mar raised a force of about 12,000 and easily captured Perth, but he was no military strategist, and struggled to make further gains. In November 1715 his army of Highlanders faced off with government troops led by the Duke of Argyll at Sheriffmuir, which ended in a costly draw.
- Meanwhile, 4000 troops consisting of Highlanders and Lowland supporters moving south into England were besieged at Preston, Lancashire and forced to surrender
- James VIII and III landed in Peterhead in December 1715 expecting to make a triumphant march through Scotland to Scone, where he would be crowned. Given the recent military setbacks, he failed to rally much clan support and sailed back in defeat to France in February of 1716.



*John Erskine, 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Mar (1635-1732)*



*James Francis Edward Stuart (1688-1766)*

Field Marshal George Wade  
(1673-1748)



## Aftermath – 1716 to 1740

*Wade's Bridge at Aberfeldy*

- Government reprisals were surprisingly muted. Most of the aristocratic ring leaders of the rebellion forfeited their estates but only two were executed for treason. Mar escaped into exile and died in France in 1732
- The Disarming and Clan Acts of 1716 attempted to inhibit the military nature of clan society and undermine its core relationships; however, few in the Highlands paid much attention. An Act of Grace in 1717 pardoned nearly all the clansmen involved in the rising, but the brief 1719 rising renewed concerns about on-going clan rebellion
- In 1724 Field Marshal George Wade was commissioned by George I to report on the situation in the Highlands and establish a means to enforce disarmament. In 1724 he established 6 Highland watches, followed by the “Black Watch” Regiments in 1739
- Wade realized a network of permanent garrisons and roads were needed for rapid deployment of troops to discourage rebellion and deal with local disturbances, as well as the need to control the route along the Great Glen from Inverness to Fort William
- In 1725 Wade was appointed Commander of His Majesty's forces and wasted no time in putting his proposals into hand. Between 1728 and 1730 a road was built to connect Perth with Inverness (A9), and by 1740, 250 miles of roads were built linking all the main garrisons, including the Great Glen forts, William, Augustus, & George.
- Forty “Wade Bridges” were also built at considerable cost. The elegant bridge over the River Tay at Aberfeldy had cost £4,000 when completed in 1734
- Wade's actions successfully kept the clans in check until 1745

# Culloden and the Fall of the Clans

Charles Edward Stuart  
(1720-1788)


- By 1740, George II had dragged Britain into war in Europe and internal political divisions brought about renewed calls for the restoration of the Stuart Monarchy. In January 1744, James VIII and III son, Prince Charles Edward Stuart (*the Young Pretender*) took leave of his father in Rome and headed for France to secure support for an invasion of Britain. France was already planning for a March naval invasion, but storms enroute forced the fleet to disperse and abandon the mission.
- French military victories against the British in 1745 led Prince Charles to try his luck again. At midday on Monday, 19 August 1745, Charles landed at Glenfinnan with very few clansmen there to greet him; however, by mid-afternoon, nearly 1000-armed clansmen from Clans Cameron, MacDonald, and MacDonell had mustered; the beginnings of an army
- Charles led a force that reached as many as 9000 Highlanders. The Jacobite army easily captured Edinburgh and went on to win a decisive victory at Prestonpans before marching on London. By December 1745 they made it as far as Derby, where internal dissent and fatigue forced their retreat to Scotland. They won yet another victory at Falkirk in January 1746.
- On April 16, 1746, forces led by Charles Stuart faced off against the British army led by William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland at Culloden moor, near Inverness. Incomprehensively, the inexperienced Charles decided to take field command of the army from his brilliant general and military tactician Lord George Murray.
- Fatigue, poor battlefield conditions, and incompetence on the part of Charles led to a crushing defeat of the Jacobite army with upwards of 1500 to 2000 killed or wounded, compared to only 300-400 for the British government side.
- Charles was forced to escape disguised as a woman, and returned to France, while Jacobite supporters were rounded up and tried for treason, with many executed or jailed. The leniency shown in the 1715 rising was not to be repeated.
- Act of Proscription 1746 resulted in the outlawing of organized clans, Highland dress (Dress Act), and carrying of weapons, such as dirks, swords, and firearms (Disarming Act). Later repealed in 1782.

# The Highland Clearances (1760-1860)

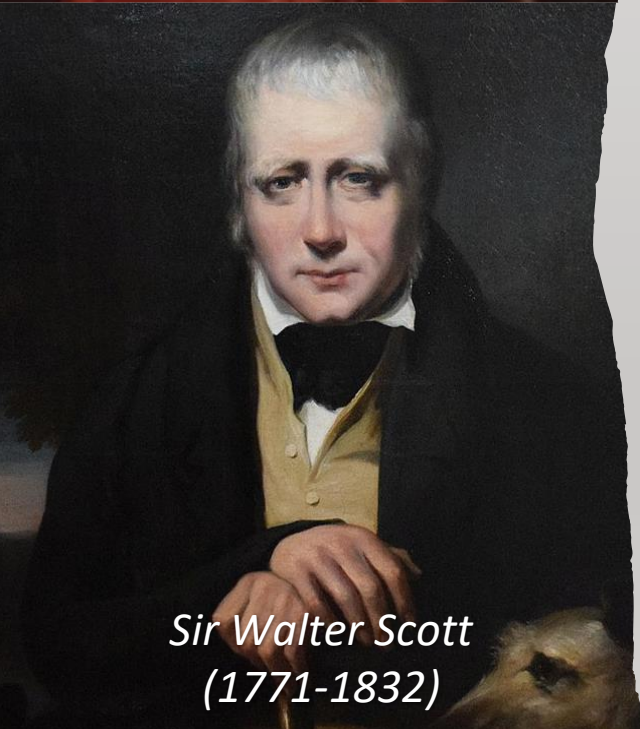
- After Culloden, the Highlands were subjected to a period of massive state terror and repression by the Hanoverian government. The Duke of Cumberland viewed the failure to destroy the clans after 1715 as a missed opportunity and vowed not to repeat the same mistake. Even clans that were loyal to the government in 1745-46 were not spared, as private courts for landowners were abolished, cattle seized, and rebel owned estates forfeited to the crown.
- However, even by the time of the 1745 Rebellion, the economic and social landscape of the Highland region was already in the midst of dramatic change. From the mid-17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, industrialization, build up of private debt & bankruptcies, food shortages, famine, overpopulation, and collapse of the kelp industry brought about enormous financial pressures on the clans, along with dispossession of land and depopulation of the *baile*.
- Throughout clan history, clan chiefs had to strike a balance between the often-conflicting concepts of *dùthchas* and *oighreachd*; however, by the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, increasing socio-economic pressures necessitated the rise of commercial landlordism, along with the steady erosion of the Highland clan chief's social contract.
- From about 1760, Clan Chiefs began evicting tenants from the land to make way for more profitable sheep or cattle grazing and large-scale farming. Similar pressures were also being put on rural Lowland tenants.
- Evicted tenants became a ready supply of industrial labor in the Lowlands; while others were sold into indentured servitude, relocated to crofts in the western coastal regions and islands, or conscripted into military service.
- Others opted to emigrate for better opportunity. The resulting emigration contributed to the large Scottish diaspora we see today primarily in Canada, Australia, U.S., and New Zealand
- The clearances ran through the mid-to-late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and while some areas saw minimal decline, many others experienced population decreases as much as 20% to 100%

# Resurgence of Highland Culture

- Only a generation after Culloden, two entirely different versions of Highland history were taking shape. The dark realities of repression and mass emigration in the Highlands ran in parallel with a romantic vision of the Highlands taking hold in the more prosperous Lowlands.
- In 1760 Scottish Poet, James MacPherson published *Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands*. Translated into English, these were purported to be very old oral works collected from the clan bards
- A year later, MacPherson claimed to have discovered a lost epic poem on the tales of Fingal, a great Celtic hero composed by a Homeric figure known as Ossian. *The Works of Ossian* were wildly popular across Britain and Europe. Set in the grandeur of the misty mountains and glens, the poems recast the Highlands in a new heroic light.
- At the time the poems were published there was much controversy over the authenticity of the works, which was not resolved until 1952. Gaelic scholar Derek Thomson concluded that while some of the material was very old, much was invented by MacPherson himself
- From 1814 to 1831, Scottish poet, novelist, and historian, Sir Walter Scott published a series of popular books set in Scotland known as the *Waverly* novels. The first in the series, *Waverly*, greatly romanticized the 1745 Jacobite rebellion, as well as the Scottish Highlands and clans
- With *Waverly*, Scott singlehandedly invented the entire genre of historical fiction, and his series of novels were so popular that by 1821 Scott had become the most famous Scotsman in history



James MacPherson  
(1736-1796)



Sir Walter Scott  
(1771-1832)

# A Royal Visit to Edinburgh

- Sir Walter Scott's romanticized version of Highland history and culture took a permanent hold due to an extraordinary event that took place in 1822
- It was decided that the newly crowned George IV would make a state visit to Scotland, the first reigning monarch to come north since the restoration of Charles II in 1660
- Due to Scott's fame and popularity, he was asked to stage manage the event
- In August 1822 George IV, along with the Lord Mayor of London, William Curtis, stepped ashore at Edinburgh to what could only be described as a two-week tartan extravaganza
- Scott even persuaded the monarch to don a Royal Stewart kilt worn several inches above the knee over flesh-colored tights.



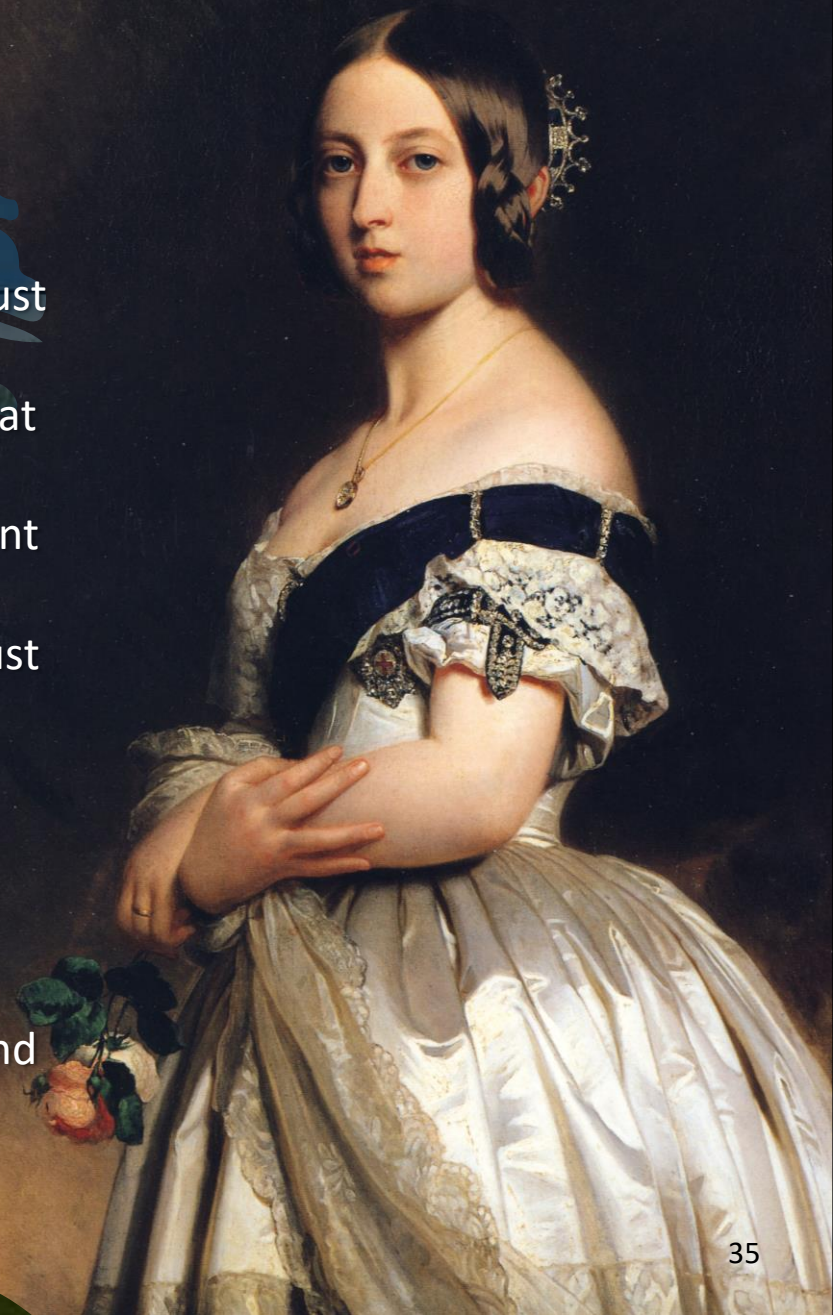
GEORDIE and WILLIE "Keeping it up" - JOHNNY BULL pays the PIPER !!

Published Sept. 3. 1822, by John Fairbairn, Broadway, Ludgate Hill.

- One witty Edinburgh lady quipped *'Since he is here for such a short time, it is well that we see so much of him'*
- It was a strange spectacle for Edinburgh, as one resident commented on behalf of many, *'[Scott] has ridiculously made us appear to be a nation of Highlanders, and the bagpipe and tartan are the order of the day'*
- George IV was not popular in England, and so his trip to Scotland and donning of a kilt were also subject to relentless parody back in London
- After George IV, it became common for subsequent Kings and members of the Royal families to wear Tartan when visiting Scotland.

# Victorian Era

- As the popularity of Scott's novels grew, they caught the attention of George IV's niece, the young Princess Victoria, who became queen at the age of 18 in 1837.
- Queen Victoria's excitement over Scott's novels made her anxious to make acquaintance with her northern kingdom, and she made her first visit to Scotland just 5 years into her reign in 1842.
- Victoria fell in love with the Scottish Highlands and Highland culture; so much so that she and her husband, Prince Albert, purchased Balmoral Castle in 1852
- The old Balmoral was demolished, and a suitable grand manor was built, resplendent with Royal Stewart Tartan carpets, furnishings, and curtains
- Balmoral had a tremendous impact. After 1855 the queen arrived there every August to spend several leisurely weeks in her beloved Highlands; and where Victoria led, high society from London and Edinburgh most certainly followed
- Queen Victoria's love of Scotland and frequent visits, along with the growing popularity of Scottish literature and music, and vast Scottish diaspora did much to revive a romantic interest in Scotland and Highland culture.
- The 19th century revival saw the beginnings of the modern Highland games, along with renewed interest in Highland dance and music, clan genealogy and identity, and the wearing of tartan and kilts that carries on today.



# The Scottish Kilt

Kilt: A costume sometimes worn by Scotsman in America or Americans in Scotland – The Devil's Dictionary, A. Bierce

- Two of the more iconic symbols of Scotland are the Scottish tartan and kilt associated with the various Highland clans
- Original Highland tartan dress dates to at least the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and was known in Gaelic as the *fèileadh mòr* or the "great plaid" or *great plaided kilt* in English.
- The *fèileadh mòr* was a large untailored tartan cloth whose upper half could be worn as a cloak draped over the shoulder, and whose lower half was manually pleated and wrapped around the waist and belted to create a kilt like effect.
- The great plaid originated in Ireland and evolved during the 16<sup>th</sup> century from the earlier "brat", which was a plain woolen cloak worn over a linen tunic or shirt, known as a *léine*



**Actor Sam Heughan of *Outlander* in a *fèileadh mòr***



- Starting in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the great wrap was slowly being replaced by the tailored *fèileadh beag*, or little plaid, more commonly known as the kilt
- The earliest versions of *fèileadh mòr* were often worn above the knee vs. at the knee as in the *fèileadh beag*, the former resembling more of a Roman military toga to improve mobility in combat.
- Military use of tailored kilts were originally adopted by the "Black Watch" regiments of the British Army, which were formed after the 1715 Jacobite Rising.
- Military kilts were exempt from the Acts of Proscription, and after its repeal in 1782, the military style kilt and its formalized accessories passed into civilian usage and have remained popular ever since

# Scottish Tartan

- Tartan is both a fabric and pattern consisting of crisscrossed bands in multiple colors and originated in woven wool. The basic repeating tile pattern of the tartan is known as the *sett*.
- The tartan cloth originated in Scotland around the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. Early tartans were simple checks of only two or three colors, which were extracted from local dye producing plants, trees, berries, and roots.
- Earliest references to the use of tartans by royals was by the treasurer to King James III, who purchased a length of cloth for the king and queen in the 15<sup>th</sup> century
- Tartan patterns were originally produced and worn regionally based on local weavers, and it was not until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that they became associated with specific clans.
- Due to growing popularity of Highland culture, the Highland Society of London wrote to clan chiefs in 1815 to ask them for samples of clan tartans so that they could be authenticated and preserved
- The chiefs were baffled by the request since they had no idea what their tartans were and had to enquire to local manufacturers. In some cases, clan tartans were created based on existing district tartans, and in other cases brand new tartans were created.

*"Glen Affric" Tartan*  
House of Edgar

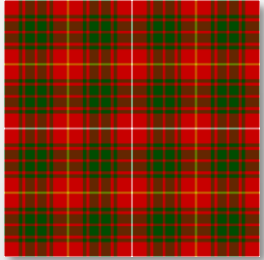
*Oldest sample of Scottish tartan was found 40 years ago in a peat bog in Glen Affric in the western Highlands. Dye analysis and radiocarbon dating found the tartan dates to around 1500-1600 AD*

# Vestiarium Scoticum

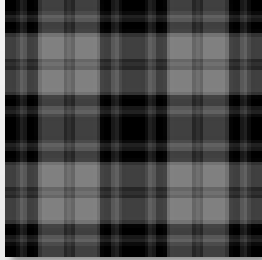
- Much of the confusion over clan tartans was settled in 1842 with the publication of the now infamous *Vestiarium Scoticum* (Scotland Clothes).
- The book was published by two Bohemian brothers, James and Charles Sobieski Stuart, who claimed to be the illegitimate grandsons of Prince Charlie
- Book contained 75 different tartan setts each linked to a specific clan
- The brothers claimed the source was a 16<sup>th</sup> century manuscript that once belonged to John Lesley, Bishop of Ross and advisor to Mary Queen of Scots
- After its publication, tartans became all the rage in England as well as Scotland, as Highlanders, Lowlanders, and British royalty and gentry all had to have the “true” tartan
- Suspicions about the book's authenticity were raised shortly after its publication, but it was not until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that it was determined to be an unequivocal fraud
- Regardless, the tartan associations with the clans stuck
- Today, Scottish Register of Tartans, established in 2008 by an act of the Scottish Parliament, keeps track of registered tartan setts



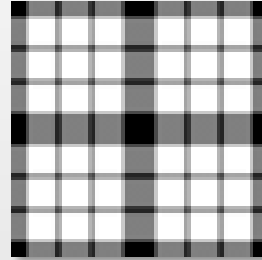
# Some Famous Clan Tartans from Vestiarium Scoticum



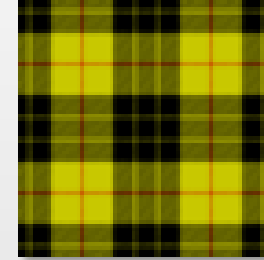
Bruce



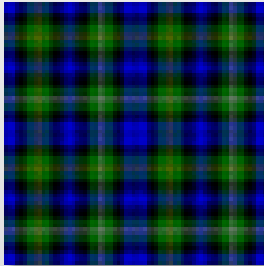
Douglas



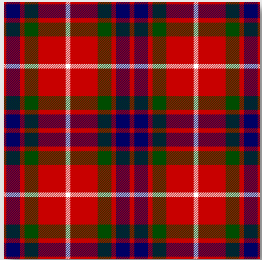
MacFarlane



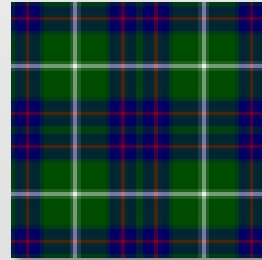
MacLeod of Lewis



Campbell



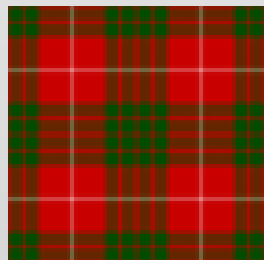
Fraser



MacIntyre



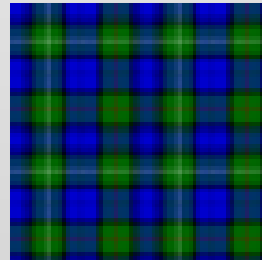
Royal Stewart



Crawford



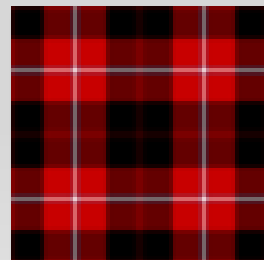
Forbes



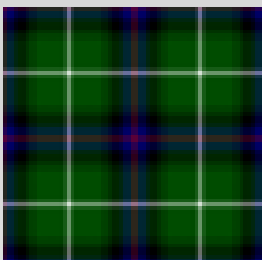
Mackenzie



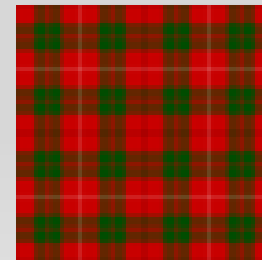
Sutherland



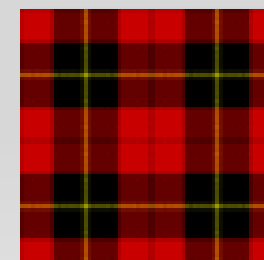
Cunningham



MacDonald



MacKinnon



Wallace

# Highland Games

- Scottish Highland Games date back hundreds of years and were originally a contest of strength and speed – jumping, running, throwing, and riding – to select the most able men for soldiers and couriers. The first historical reference to the event was made during the reign of Malcom III (1057-1093) who summoned men to race up Creag Choinnich near Braemar, with the winner to serve as royal messenger
- Over time, the Highland Games grew in number and popularity as other talents like music and dance were sought out as a means of adding prestige to the clan; however, the Games suffered a major setback with the Act of Proscription in 1746, which dismantled Highland identity, along with public interest in Highland customs
- After its repeal in 1782, the Games started to revive, and enthusiasm for Highland customs was given a tremendous boost with the visit of George IV to Scotland in 1822. The Braemar Highland Society, which formed in 1815, organized the first modern-day games in 1832, known as the *Braemar Gathering*, offering cash prizes to the competitors.
- Queen Victoria first attended the Braemar Gathering in 1848, and in 1866 granted Royal status to its organizers, the Braemar Royal Highland Society, which is currently the oldest surviving Friendly (benevolent) Society in the UK
- Queen Victoria's endorsement of the Highland Games helped boost the Games popularity as a global export. More importantly, as many Scots were displaced from their ancestral homes, they moved around the world and retained many of their traditions and customs, including the Games.
- By the mid-20th century annual Highland Games had been established not just in Scotland but throughout the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. The first US Highland games took place in 1836 in New York, and of course the Saint Andrews Society of Detroit Games, which started nearly 175 years ago in 1850, is the oldest continuous running games in North America

# Clan Maps of Scotland

- What Scot doesn't like to find their family name on a map of Scotland?
- Clan maps like the one shown on the right, try to show the general geographic distribution of the major Scottish clans
- Origins and geographic distribution of Highland and Lowland clans varied considerably over their 600-year history, as territories were always in flux and contested
- As such, there is no definitive historically based geographic distribution that can be easily shown on a map. The Clan Forbes Society describes these maps as "pleasant fictions"
- Most maps available today are representative of the general sphere of clan influence around the time of King James the VI up to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- Clan maps today are all products of the Victorian era and emerged due to the renewed interest in Highland clans and culture, as well as to promote genealogical tourism catering specifically to the Scottish diaspora.



# Scottish Clans Today

- Clans are legal entities that have chiefs that can trace ancestry back to registered clan chiefs with the Court of Lord Lyon, which is a standing court of law in Scotland that regulates Scottish heraldry.
- Clan Chiefs in heraldic law have the right to bear *undifferenced arms*. Spouses and descendants not recognized by Court of Lord Lyon can wear modified versions of arms in a system known as *cadency*
- There are no “family Coats of Arms”, all Arms are individual to a person. Clan chiefs have a heraldic crest (with strap and buckle) and tartan that can be worn by clan members as a sign of allegiance.
- Scottish law recognizes both Clans and Families with registered chiefs. Clans were typically Gaelic speaking from the Highlands and Families were predominantly from the Lowlands and spoke Inglis or Scots, but that is more of a modern generalization than official classification.
- There are around 140 recognized clans and families with chiefs. Clans in which the blood lines have ended, or no longer have recognized chiefs, are colloquially referred to as ***armigerous clans***. Armigerous clans are not an official designation, as the word means “a right to bear arms”.



Coat of Arms for  
Campbell Clan Chief,  
Torquihil Ian Campbell,  
13<sup>th</sup> (6<sup>th</sup>) Duke of Argyll



Crest & Tartan for Clan  
Campbell of Argyll

Motto: *Ne Obliviscaris*  
(Forget Not)



# Legacy

- The popularity of Scottish Clans and Highland culture has only grown since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Unlike the romanticized literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, 20<sup>th</sup> century Scottish literature took a more realistic and sympathetic view of Highland culture and its decline, with much more focus on social and economic justice, and the role of woman as pillars of clan society
- The 20<sup>th</sup> century also showed the growth of Clan Societies, which help to preserve the clan's cultural heritage and promote their unique history and traditions, as well allow members of the Scottish diaspora to connect with other clan members. There are over 300 such societies worldwide.
- Popularity is also evident in the portrayal of clans and Highland culture in TV and movies, such as BBC's *Culloden* (1964), the sci-fi fantasy *Highlander* (1986), historical biopic *Rob Roy* (1995), Pixar's animated *Brave* (2012), and the *Outlander* TV series based on the popular Diana Gabaldon novels.
- Despite the pandemic setback, international tourism to Scotland has increased 23% since 2015, and the popularity of Highland Games, music, dance, and wearing of tartan and kilts has remained unabated, with over 160 clan societies, 2000 pipe bands, 150 Highland dance schools, and 70 Highland games in the U.S. alone
- Today more and more people are discovering their Scottish ancestry through on-line genealogical research and now DNA testing, which is sparking expanding interest in Scottish heritage and Highland culture through succeeding generations



END



# THE HIGHLAND CLANS

*Bruce Gray*

