



Scottish Culture and History



A Very Brief History of Scotland

Scotland is a beautiful land but a hard task master. Her mountains and moor lands, broad rivers and steep-sided lochs have driven millions of Scots to seek a better living than they could find at home.

Men first came to Scotland after the Ice Ages, settling along the coast. About 2000 BC, came a people who built huge monuments in stone. These people left little clue as to their language or where they had come from. Then, about 200 BC there came the first wave of Celtic-speaking people, amongst them the Picts, who eventually held all of Scotland north of the River Forth.

In 81 AD the Romans invaded southern Scotland but the harsh land and supply problems for their army forced them to retreat. In 122 AD, Hadrian built a wall to keep the "barbarians" out of England.

Between the fourth and seventh centuries, Christian missionaries succeeded in subduing the wild Scots where the Romans had failed. With the unity of Christianity, a united Scotland became more plausible. By 1018 AD, a united Scotland was finally a reality. However, due to its ruggedness, Scotland was hard to defend and it was invaded many times by the Vikings who succeeded in gaining a strong foothold — in fact, many modern Scots owe their reddish hair to those Norsemen.



A Pict



The Battle of Culloden

In 1066, England was invaded by William the Conqueror from Normandy in what is now France and, following his win over the English, many of his knights and their followers moved north and settled in Scotland. Many Scottish families owe their origins to these Norman knights and their followers.

England was concerned about a "foreign" power on its northern border and made repeated attempts to overrun Scotland. Force failed and, as an alternate ploy, England offered bribes of land and money to the various Clan Chiefs.

As a result, in the various uprisings by the Scots against the English, many of the Clans fought for the English against their own countrymen. To defend their land against invasion from other Clans, the Chiefs built castles and fortified towers. Many of these remain today. Ultimately, in 1746, following the landing in Scotland of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, the English crushed the Scots at the battle of Culloden.

Scotland had always been a nation of the rich and the very poor. Wishing to further increase their own wealth, many of the land-owner Chiefs



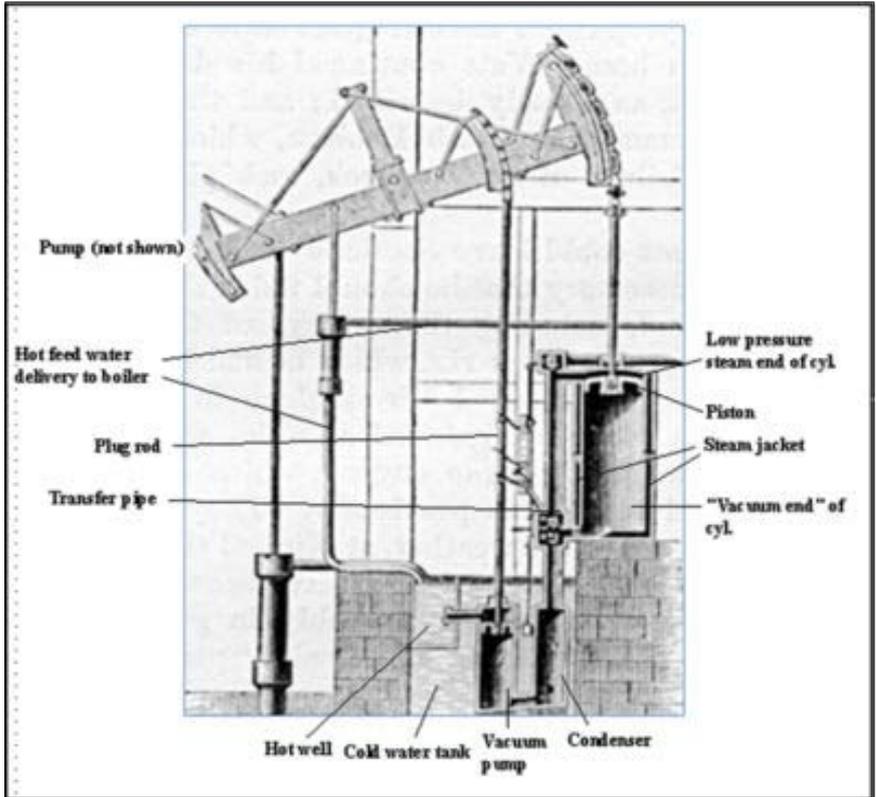
Crofters

forced their tenants off the lands they had worked for centuries in what has been called the “Clearances” and replaced their former tenant farmers with sheep. Many thousands of Scots were forced to leave their country, some travelling to Canada, others to the United States, Australia or New Zealand.

The “Industrial Revolution” saw Scotland again come to the fore with many inventions that today we take for granted — penicillin, bitumen roads, the steam engine, the telephone etc. Scotland also became arguably the world’s leading ship builders. Amongst hundreds of others, both the Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth were built in Scottish shipyards.

Today, Scotland is a land of contrasts — from its great cities, such as Edinburgh and Glasgow to the still largely undeveloped Highlands in the north. Nowadays, there are more Scots living outside Scotland than there are in Scotland itself. But the spirit of “homeland” still remains strong in those expatriate Scots who keep alive their old traditions and culture. It has been said, surprisingly accurately, that the Scots outside Scotland are more Scottish than those living in Scotland itself.

Scotland’s modern cities offer a vibrant cosmopolitan atmosphere, its villages a glimpse of a romantic past and its countryside and mountains, particularly the Highlands, a formidable challenge to those that would take them on. More than 5000 years after our story began, Scotland remains a beautiful land but a hard task master.



James Watt's Steam Engine