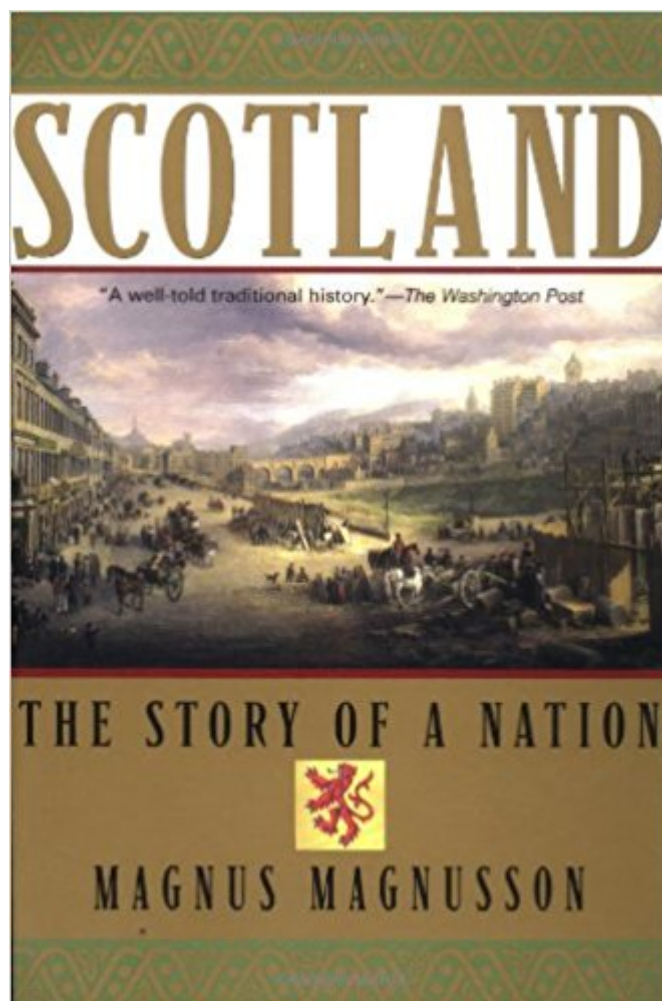


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Scotland: The Story Of A Nation



Synopsis

Hailed as a "vast, superb history [that] relates Scotland's past over a dozen millennia" (Kirkus Reviews), Magnusson draws on a great deal of modern scholarship to redefine a nation's history. He charts the long struggle toward nationhood, explores the roots of the original Scots, and examines the extent to which Scotland was shaped by the Romans, the Picts, the Vikings, and the English. Encompassing everything from the first Mesolithic settlers in 7000 B.C. to the present movements for independence, *Scotland: The Story of a Nation* is history on an epic level, essential reading for anyone interested in the rich past of this captivating land.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Near Stirling, Scotland, stands a memorial to the warrior William Wallace, put to death at the orders of the English king Edward I in 1305. Within that memorial stands a glass case, and inside of it stands a broadsword 1.7 meters long. Legend has it that the hero himself wielded the weapon, and so "Wallace's Sword" it is. Magnus Magnusson, a native of Iceland who has long lived in and written about Scotland, may spoil it for some readers when he writes that Wallace's Sword probably wasn't Wallace's. To use it, Wallace would have had to have stood at least 6-foot-6 in height and to have lived two centuries later. The business of the sword is just one of the "cherished conceptions" about Scottish history that Magnusson picks apart and then, corrected and improved, restores. At other turns he considers the true identity of the legendary king Macbeth (and entertains some surprising but plausible theories about the king's alter ego); reconstructs decisive battles such as Otterburn, Flodden, and Glencoe; and looks closely at the complicated negotiations (and, many would say, treacheries) that led to the union with England of 1707. Magnusson closes with an account of

modern independence movements and the recent return of some measure of national autonomy, opening a "new chapter in a nation's story, which the people of Scotland are now beginning to write." Lucid, witty, and unafraid of controversy, Magnusson's book does a fine job of condensing a complex history, stretching out for 10 millennia, into a single volume. --Gregory McNamee --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This overly heroic history of Scotland focuses almost exclusively on royalty and warfare. Loosely patterned after Sir Walter Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather* (1827-1829), Magnusson's *The Vikings* narrative purports to describe Scotland from the Stone Age to the present. Yet his omissions are breathtaking. What of Scotland's amazing (for its size) achievements during the European Enlightenment? Adam Smith is mentioned once, the seminal philosopher David Hume twice in passing. We're treated to a dozen pages about the Battle of Falkirk (wherein England's implacable King Edward I defeated William Wallace in 1298) and its aftermath. But Magnusson never mentions Scotland's central role in the Industrial Revolution, when Glasgow emerged as a global industrial center ("industry" isn't even listed in the index). Magnusson's narrative reads like a medieval saga, filled with swashbuckling tales of kings and battlefield heroics, leaving the reader to wonder how the average person lived. That said, he does emphasize some crucial themes in Scottish history: its constant struggle with hegemonic England, the problems of royal succession and how they led to national instability, and the bloody conflict between Church and State, especially during the reign of the Stuarts. Former chairman of the Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland, Magnusson deftly describes Scotland's geopolitical heritage. He also works hard to dispel some myths, taking particular aim at the film *Braveheart* and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Magnusson's critical problem, however, is that once he runs out of Scottish kings (circa 1745), he runs out of steam. Still, while hardly definitive, this is worthwhile for those with an interest in early Scottish history. Color & b&w illus. not seen by PW. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Just started to read this detailed history of Scotland .Documentation is extensive and I will enjoy reading this historical chronology over the winter months.

This book was recommended to me and I have found it to be a very very well written history of Scotland from the beginnings up to the present. I highly recommend it!

With many pictures and maps provided, this was a great read to learn the framework of Scottish history.

Excellent, engaging, inciteful - I read this book before and during a 2 week trip to Scotland. Many of the Scottish friends that I made while there knew about Magnusson and complemented my choice of reading. I came to the book with a very minimal knowledge of Scottish history and couldn't put it down. His patterning the chapters along Sir Walter Scott's history book was clever very clever. I highly recommend this!

This book arrived promptly, carefully wrapped and packaged. It's a thorough, well-written account, with lots of prints and pictures which I did not expect. Much more interesting to read than your typical history book

This book is full of information. If you love history, then this book is a must read.

I have read this book, well parts of it anyway once or twice; and I can tell you that you may never find a more helpful history of scotland anywhere at any time. From the prehistoric periods to the 20th century, you can read about it all.

this is a fantastic book for someone who wants to learn the history of Scotland.

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