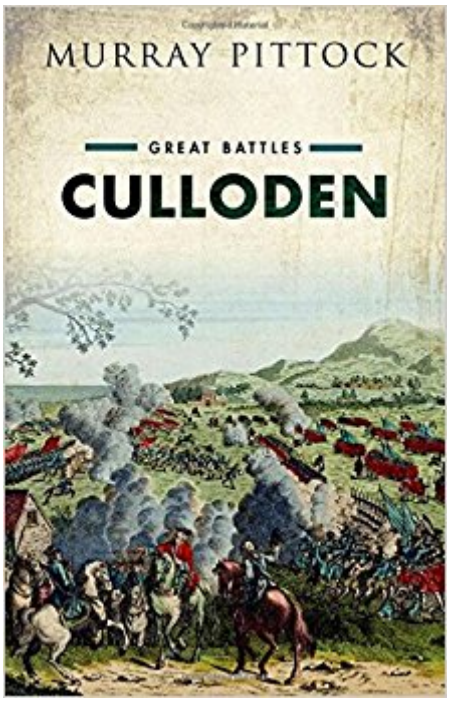
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Culloden (Great Battles)



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Synopsis

The battle of Culloden lasted less than an hour. The forces involved on both sides were small, even by the standards of the day. And it is arguable that the ultimate fate of the 1745 Jacobite uprising had in fact been sealed ever since the Jacobite retreat from Derby several months before. But for all this, Culloden is a battle with great significance in British history. It was the last pitched battle on the soil of the British Isles to be fought with regular troops on both sides. It came to stand for the final defeat of the Jacobite cause. And it was the last domestic contestation of the Act of Union of 1707, the resolution of which propelled Great Britain to be the dominant world power for the next 150 years. If the battle itself was short, its aftermath was brutal - with the depredations of the Duke of Cumberland followed by a campaign to suppress the clan system and the Highland way of life. And its afterlife in the centuries since has been a fascinating one, pitting British Whig triumphalism against a growing romantic memorialization of the Jacobite cause. On both sides there has long been a tendency to regard the battle as a dramatic clash, between Highlander and Lowlander, Celt and Saxon, Catholic and Protestant, the old and the new. Yet, as this account of the battle and its long cultural afterlife suggests, while viewing Culloden in such a way might be rhetorically compelling, it is not necessarily good history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"[Culloden] is fresh, concise, free from jargon and well informed about realities."--History Today, Jeremy Black"Murray Pittock persuasively argues that Culloden was ’one of the decisive battles of

the world.’ [and]... call[s] attention to the real meaning of the 1745 uprising."--The Weekly Standard"[Culloden] is a concise yet very complete retelling of the famous engagement... [Pittock’s] knowledge and attention to detail show through."--Military Heritage

Professor Murray Pittock is Bradley Professor and Pro Vice-Principal at the University of Glasgow, and one of the leading scholars of Jacobitism and Romanticism globally. His books include The Myth of the Jacobite Clans, Material Culture and Sedition, Poetry and Jacobite Politics, Jacobitism, Inventing and Resisting Britain, The Invention of Scotland, and many others. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and of the Royal Historical Society and has won or been nominated or shortlisted for fifteen literary prizes internationally.

A bit of a heavy read in the second half but worth sticking with as it explains how the battle and the jacobite army have been misrepresented for so long and why.

Good overview of the battle

Very well written

I was part of the great unwashed who believed Culloden was a battle between hordes of poorly trained highlanders up against well-drilled and well-equipped British soldiers. I had an excuse for this that doesn’t involve novels. I watch an episode of the television show You Are There, which portrayed important historical events as if they were actually happening and being reported by Walter Cronkite on site interviewing participants. It was riveting, and though I must have watched several episodes it is the Battle of Culloden I remember best.This book was a revelation to me, especially the second half. Pittock described the effect of the battle on the attitude of the British and the Scottish people for years to come. He uses examples of art to show how public opinion was formed, not by historical accounts, but by sentimental and inaccurate paintings.This was a fascinating account of the battle and its aftermath that changed my thinking about this important battle.

Legalities: I received an Advanced Reader Copy (ARC) from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.Beware the endnotes instead of footnotes. This reviewer sees no socially redeeming reason for making her flip pages to hunt what the author thinks is important enough to add.Though the

author is British, I had no trouble with the spelling differences, nor most of the grammatical differences between British English and American English. However, the author seems to assume his readers will all be British, with a working knowledge of the history of Culloden, not to mention the British military and their jargon. A glossary at the beginning of the book would have been extremely useful.I can’t help but wonder if this is a book Pittock will require his students to buy, and use in his classroom.About halfway through the book, a miracle occurred. The pace picked up, and it became almost a page burner. I wish Pittock had elaborated on the women and children who were killed because they got in the way (were they in the way, deliberately shot, or caught in cross fire?), and later, the women (and children?) who were shipped off with their husbands? I would have liked to read how the Scots used the pipes for communication ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ was it by tone, or song, or ???Because of the second half of the book, I am giving it 4 stars. If I could give it 3.5 I would ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ I really miss not having an index and I really hate endnotes.Do I recommend this book? Yes, especially if you are an historian and somewhat familiar with Culloden and British military history and use of terms. If you’re a history buff, like this reviewer, I still recommend it, but know the first part is a slog. It’s slow, it’s filled with dates and facts, and reminds one of the history books we had in elementary school that put us to sleep. Skim the beginning; read the second half. That’s where the good stuff is.

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