



Did You Know?

- The word “clan,” which describes a group of families, comes from the Gaelic term for “children” or “offspring.” The Highland clan system placed a high premium on military service, skill and courage.
- Killed Highland mercenaries hired to fight in Ireland during the 15th century were nicknamed “redshanks” because of their bare legs. Highlanders also fought in the armies of France, Sweden, the Netherlands and the German states.
- The basket-hilted broadsword, or *claidheamh mòr*, was the weapon of choice for Highlanders from the 16th century. Scottish craftsmen made the distinctive iron hilts, but the blades were imported from Europe — especially from Solingen, Germany. Warriors also had a round shield (*targe*), and long knife (*dirk*).
- By the 17th century, highlanders began wearing the belted plaid or *feileadh mòr*. This large piece of fabric, loosely gathered around the waist and secured with a belt, was a precursor of the tailored, pleated kilt.
- With the advent of firearms, Highlands warriors added pistols to their array of weapons. They often carried a musket, in place of the traditional longbow.
- Between 1689 and 1746, Highland armies took part in four failed attempts to restore the Stuart monarchs to the British throne. In response to the Jacobite rebellions, as they were known, the British government enacted laws to ban Scottish cultural practices and destroy the warrior clan system. The British made it illegal for Highlanders to keep or carry swords, dirks, pistols or muskets, and outlawed piping and the wearing of tartans.
- The term “Jacobite” is derived from *Jacobus*, the Latin form of “James,” and describes the subjects who remained loyal to James II of England (James VII of Scotland), the last Catholic British monarch. He was deposed by Parliament during the Glorious Revolution of 1688, and his nephew and son-in-law William III, Prince of Orange, ascended the throne as William III of England jointly with his wife, Mary II, who was James' daughter.

- The final defeat of the Jacobite army at the battle of Culloden in 1746 was the last land battle fought in Britain, and the last battle fought by Highland clans.
- As Britain and France struggled for global supremacy during the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), Highland soldiers became sought-after recruits for the British Army. For Highland chiefs, raising regiments for the government provided income while demonstrating loyalty to the British Crown in the wake of the Jacobite rebellions.
- Four Highland regiments participated in Britain's final defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815. The Highlanders' contributions to the victory were immortalized in paintings, poetry and song.
- Highlanders became known as tough, courageous and adaptable soldiers. Their exploits around the globe were retold in the popular press, fuelling their reputation, and turning them into a convenient and potent national symbol.
- As the reputation of Highland regiments grew, so did the extravagance of their officers' dress, with increasingly elaborate and expensive feather bonnets, sporrans, dirks and pistols.
- Many soldiers serving in Highland regiments overseas chose to settle in the newly established British colonies, rather than return to Scotland. In Canada, growing numbers of Scottish immigrants often maintained their sense of community by forming associations or societies.
- Joining a Highland or Scottish unit of the Militia became popular after Confederation in 1867, when most of the British garrison withdrew from Canada. Serving in the Militia was an expression of the economic and political success of many Scots in Canada, reflected in expensive uniforms, pipe bands, and numerous social and cultural activities.
- Four years into the Second World War, with Britain experiencing a severe shortage of junior officers, 673 Canadians volunteered to serve in these roles with the British Army. These CANLOAN officers earned high praise amongst the British regiments in which they served. One, Lieutenant LeMesurier, was awarded the Military Cross in 1945 for his bravery, including an incident when, having run out of ammunition, he attacked the enemy with nothing but a shovel.
- The Lovat Scouts began as a regiment of Highland shepherds and deerstalkers, recruited in 1900 for the South African War. During the Second World War, they were selected for mountain warfare, and trained around Jasper, Alberta, in the Canadian Rockies. Their specialized training in skiing, glacier-climbing and survival training was amongst the toughest endured by any Allied unit.
- Bagpipes are a unique part of the Highland military tradition, and have been used to motivate warriors in battle since the time of the clans. The instrument produces music that is loud and stirring enough for battle, yet appropriately solemn and mournful in its aftermath.

- During the First World War, Highland units were issued kilt covers, or aprons, to camouflage their dark tartan kilts in the field. Kilts were retired from combat in 1940 because of the vulnerability of bare skin to chemical agents, but they remain as a formal dress uniform.
- Kilts don't have pockets, so traditional Highland dress includes a sporran: a small pouch used to carry money, food, small tools, ammunition and other items. The sporran hangs from a leather strap or chain around the waist.
- Piping and Highland dress — two colourful, dramatic and distinctive symbols of Scotland — survive to this day, thanks largely to their use by Highland military regiments.
- In 1690, about a third of Scotland's one million residents lived in the Highlands. Today, less than 5 percent of its Scotland's 5.4 million residents call the Highlands home.

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