



**Scottish Highland Games are festivals** that celebrate Scottish culture and pipers are always a hit there. There are many attractions at Highland Games, an event increasingly popular in the United States and around the world. There are the clans, the music (piping, bands, drumming, Scottish harp, fiddling), the vendors, the *ceilidh* (pronounced “kay” + “lee,” it simply means a party), the animals, the dancing and the athletics (light athletics, heavy athletics, tug-of-war). Some of the attractions may be in the form of a demonstration or exhibition, while other events may be competitions, with judges, scoring and prizes, such as the “caber” toss. The caber is basically a tree stripped of limbs that athletes attempt to flip end-over-end. There are a lot of myths about how caber tossing originated, but one opinion is that it’s just a neat way to propel a tree trunk through the air. Perfect execution is called a “12 o’clock turn,” where the caber falls straight away from where the athlete launches it.

# *The Scottish Contribution to Freedom in Revolutionary America*

**BEING A SCOT IS NOT ALL KILTS AND BAGPIPES**, by any means. Often inaccurately portrayed as backward romantics, the Scots in many ways laid an essential foundation for today's intellectual, commercial and political milieu. Each place they entered around the globe—North America, Australia, India—they left their mark. Most of it seems to have been of a distinctly positive nature. Here we focus on the contributions of Scotsmen to the culture of the United States.

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By JOHN TIFFANY

Scots and people of Scottish descent have for some reason contributed to our civilization far out of proportion to their numbers. In fact, if it were not for the Scots, there would probably be no such thing as the United States as an independent nation. Oddly, there would probably be no British empire either; however, that matter lies outside the scope of this article.

The Scottish connection with the United States, or what was to become the United States, goes back as far as possible in our history.

Born in Scotland about A.D. 1345, Henry Sinclair became earl of Rosslyn and the surrounding lands as well as prince of Orkney, duke of Oldenburg (in Denmark), and premier earl of Norway. In 1398 he led an expedition to explore Nova Scotia and Massachusetts—90 years before Columbus discovered America. He was a Freemason, and the evidence indicates he was an heir of the tradition of the Knights Templar. He journeyed to New England with Sir James Gunn, the Zeno brothers and others.

Officially, however, the founder of British America, the precursor of our nation, was another Scot—James Stewart

by name. In 1603, when the Scottish king, known in those parts as King James VI, became James I of England as well, the first king of the United Kingdom, there was no presence to speak of in the Americas of any people of British Isles descent. (Raleigh, under Queen Elizabeth I, had tried unsuccessfully to establish a colony on these shores in 1585.) By 1607 James's London Company had established the first permanent British colony in the New World. It was named Jamestown, in his honor.

David Thompson, a Scot, was the first acting governor of New England and in 1623 became New Hampshire's first settler. Scottish governors quickly followed in Rhode Island, New Jersey and North and South Carolina.

The first charitable organization in North America was a Scottish one, the Scottish Charitable Society in Boston. Scot Andrew Hamilton was appointed in 1691 the first postmaster general of the Colonies.

Meanwhile the Scottish pirate Captain Kidd (first name William) was operating out of Long Island. Having been hired by the colony of New York to get rid of pirates, Kidd wound up becoming one instead. The crew of his ship, betrayed by the king and other high panjandrums, upon discovering their betrayal threatened Kidd with death unless he turned the ship into a pirate vessel. He did not set out



## This Revolutionary Scotsman Was a Champion of Free Speech

Gen. Alexander McDougall, shown at right, was born on the Inner Hebridean Isle of Islay, Scotland in 1732. The hardworking McDougalls were pious Presbyterians. When the chance arose in the late 1730s to join a group of Highlanders moving to America, they decided to sail to New York with little more than the clothes on their backs. Alexander eventually became the master of small cargo ships, and wound up commanding a 12-gun sloop, the *Barrington*, in 1759. McDougall also became a successful merchant. In 1769, he became an outspoken leader of the “Sons of Liberty” when he authored an anonymous broadside, in which he charged the New York Assembly with betraying the people’s trust. He was arrested a few days later and charged with writing the “seditious and libelous” paper. McDougall gained fame when he refused to plead guilty or pay bail, opting to go to jail, becoming one of the first Americans to be imprisoned in defense of freedom of the press. When a new governor took office in 1771, McDougall was released from jail. Thus he became an activist for freedom of speech and political liberty. McDougall assumed an active, radical leadership role for the Sons of Liberty against importation, in spite of the fact that his own income was adversely affected by such a stance. In 1773, he was instrumental in devising a scheme to prevent the British from landing a shipment of tea in New York, by helping organize a group of men, dressed as Mohawks, who dumped the cargo overboard. He actively and enthusiastically recruited men for the First New York Regiment, and often paid military bills with his own money. In 1776, McDougall, mindful of the fact that a well-trained fleet was essential to defeating the British, helped create an American Navy. And when Gen. Washington decided to evacuate his army from Long Island, he selected McDougall to organize the dangerous but successful venture. He died in 1786.



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A number of America’s presidents were also of Scottish blood, including (bolded name = pictured): **John Adams** and John Quincy Adams, **Andrew Jackson**, **James Polk**, James Buchanan,

to be a pirate, and many historians consider him America’s first folk hero.

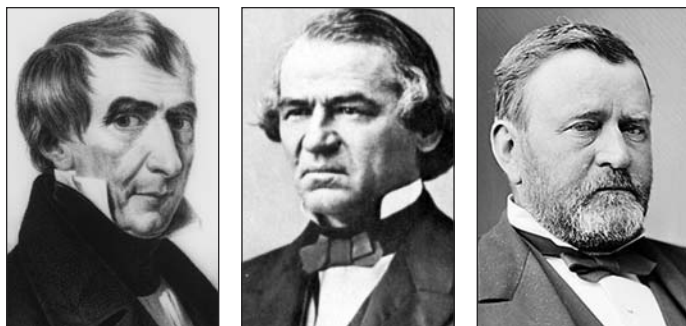
After 1707, and the union of the parliaments, Scots poured unimpeded into America, settling mostly south of Connecticut and in the Carolinas (previously England had made it hard for the Scots to settle in America, even though both Scotland and England were under one monarch). Scotch-Irish people came in boatloads to New England, but mostly to Philadelphia, moving on to New Jersey and parts of Pennsylvania—thus such place names as McKeesport and Gettysburg.

In the seven decades leading up to the Revolution, Scots, who had been scarce in the Colonies, became the most numerous minority in many places, and were (in general) financially successful. The pioneer merchant of Baltimore was Dr. John Stevenson, and in 1730 his fellow Scot, George Buchanan, laid out the city’s streets. Thus Scots were practically the founders of that great city.

In Virginia the Scots soon became predominant in the tobacco industry, and brought Virginia wood, tar, pig iron and cotton to the world market.

Their success sometimes backfired on the Scots as prejudice against them arose. Georgia actually passed a law banning Scots from settling there. Yet management of the Colonies was put largely in Scottish hands: more than 100 terms as colonial governors were served by members of the Scottish minority.

Among these, Alexander Spotswood was particularly distinguished. Governing Virginia from 1710 to 1722, he helped bring the frontier under British influence and was the main driving force behind the development of the tobacco business, which laid the foundation of Virginia’s wealth. Following him was Robert Dinwiddie, who discovered a young man named George Washington, and gave the young Washington’s career a start. (The ancestry of George Washington, Virginia planter, American general, victorious commander-in-chief of the Continental Army and father of our country, has been traced back to the Scot-



**William Henry Harrison, Andrew Johnson, Ulysses S. Grant, Grover Cleveland, Chester A. Arthur, William McKinley, Benjamin Harrison, Woodrow Wilson, Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter.**

tish King Malcolm II.)

The founder of Georgia, James Oglethorpe, although considered an Englishman, wore a kilt (his mom was Scottish). Near the end of the Colonial period, the governor of Georgia was Archibald Bulloch, an ancestor of Theodore Roosevelt. (Evidently the anti-Scottish law didn't keep all the Scots out.)

Many schools (such as Princeton) were started in America by the Scots (including the Scotch-Irish), along with many newspapers and book publishing houses.

It is not surprising that the Scots and their Presbyterian churches played a key role in the American Revolution. With the long history of hostility between Scotland and England, Scottish-Americans naturally had no great sympathy for the English or British government.

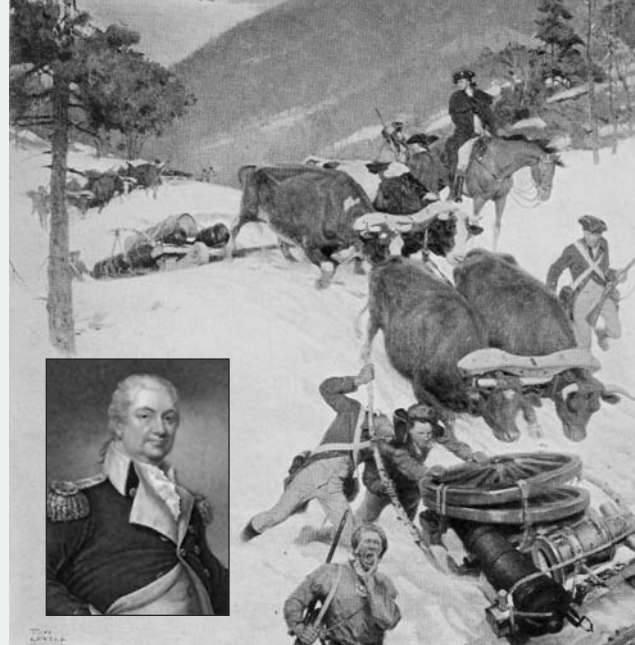
The widely circulated pastoral letter issued by the Presbyterian Synod of Philadelphia in 1775, urging the Colonists to support the future decisions of the Continental Congress, was the chief cause of the Colonies' determination to resist British tyranny.

And it has been suggested that the Presbyterian tradition of choosing church leaders from the bottom up, not from the top down, was, in large part, the basis for American democracy. Indeed, history suggests that the concept of egalitarianism is a much older and stronger concept among Scots than among Englishmen.

It has been said that in the American Revolution, a Presbyterian loyalist was an unheard of thing.

British soldiers in some areas were instructed to burn farmhouses to the ground if they were found to contain Presbyterian Bibles.

In the famous freedom-of-the-press incident involving John Peter Zenger, his lawyer was Andrew Hamilton, a Scottish lawyer from Philadelphia. The judge instructed the jury to merely determine whether Zenger had printed the statements in question, leaving the question of whether they were "libelous" to the judge to decide. Hamilton's eloquent arguments addressed the concepts of free press and the



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## Knox Moves Ticonderoga

**T**HE AMERICAN CENSUS OF 1790 recorded only 6.7% of the population as being Scottish or of Scottish descent. Yet this small percentage of the people made an overwhelming contribution to the new U.S. nation. (King George III, recognizing this fact, is said to have called the American secession "a Presbyterian war," Scots being often of that church.) Henry Knox (1750-1806), a Scot-American born in America (Boston), is one case in point. He was the first U.S. secretary of war and a lifelong personal friend of Gen. George Washington, and one of Washington's most trusted officers. Knox directed Washington's troops when they crossed the Delaware River in December 1776 to march on Trenton. He fought in battles around New York City, and at Brandywine, and at Germantown, Monmouth and Yorktown. He received the surrender of the British troops at New York.

As chief commander of the artillery during the Revolutionary War, Knox successfully delivered 50 cannon from the recently captured Fort Ticonderoga to Boston 300 miles away (see illustration above and on front cover). This was a monumental feat, considering it was in the dead of winter and he had to use sleds pulled by oxen to haul the guns. When the British realized the cannon had been successfully delivered to the outskirts of Boston, they retreated from the city and the harbor. Knox sat at the court-martial that tried and condemned British Maj. John André for spying. He also started an artillery school in Morristown, the forerunner of West Point Military Academy (of which he is considered the founder). Inset: Knox.



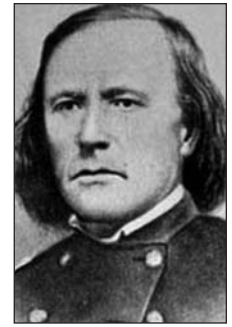
# John Witherspoon:

## Scottish Preacher Only Clergyman Who Signed the Declaration



**R**ev. John Witherspoon (1722-1794), the only ordained clergyman to sign the Declaration of Independence, was born in Gifford, Scotland. He declined the presidency of Princeton College in 1766, but accepted a second invitation, and was inaugurated in August 1768. He brought with him 300 valuable volumes as a gift to the college.

Finding the treasury empty, he made a tour in New England, raising money, also from other colonies. He enlarged the course of philosophy so as to include political science and international law, and promoted the study of mathematics. The college received a great expansion through his administrative ability and the introduction of progressive methods. Besides other improvements in the system of teaching, he introduced the lecture method, and gave lectures himself on rhetoric, moral philosophy, history and theology. He was a leader of the Presbyterians of the country in embracing the side of the patriots in the difficulties with the British crown, identifying himself with the colonial contention from his landing in America, and by his influence and example doing much to attach the Scottish population to the patriot cause. On May 17, 1776, which was appointed by Congress as a day of fasting, he delivered a sermon on "The Dominion of Providence over the Passions of Men," which was published and dedicated to John Hancock, and reprinted in Glasgow with notes denouncing the author as a rebel and traitor. The people of New Jersey elected him to the convention that framed the state constitution, and he surprised his fellow members with his knowledge of law. On June 22 he was elected to the Continental Congress. He was impatient of delay in passing the Declaration of Independence, declaring that "he that will not respond to its accents, and strain every nerve to carry into effect its provisions, is unworthy the name of freeman," and protesting for himself that "although these gray hairs must soon descend into the sepulcher, I would infinitely rather that they should descend thither by the hand of the public executioner than desert at this crisis the sacred cause of my country." Would that we had more preachers like John Witherspoon today.



An impressive number of American pioneers, inventors and patriots, including Betsy Ross, Sam Houston, **David Crockett**, Jim Bowie, **Daniel Boone**, **Kit Carson**, John Chisholm (of Chisholm Trail fame), Richard King (King

limits of judges' power, and he encouraged the jurors to decide whether the government had been "libeled." The jury found Zenger not guilty, establishing freedom of the press in America. The attitude of the Colonists toward England was never the same.

By 1774 the Continental Congress had formed the first government of the United Colonies, and elected Peyton Randolph, of partly Scottish descent, as our first president.

Americans were openly discussing secession from England, and especially in the west, where Scotch-Irish settlers met in Pennsylvania communities and Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, to oppose continued British rule.

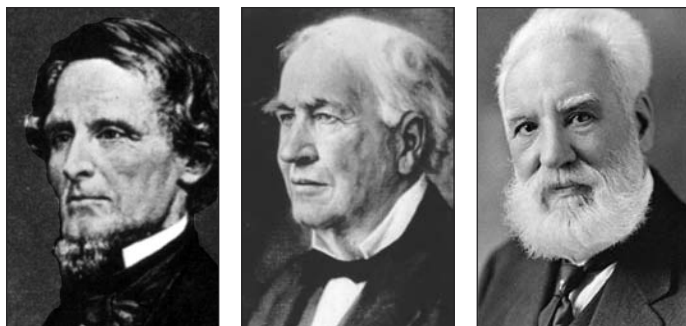
"The shot heard round the world" may have been fired by Scottish-American Ebenezer Munro of the Lexington Minutemen. Ironically the British response (or maybe it was actually the first shot fired) was from Maj. John Pitcairn, another Scot.

The Scotch-Irish were revolutionaries almost to a man, and the most determined revolutionaries. The Scotch-Irish troops stayed through the painful winter at Valley Forge with George Washington while other troops deserted.

One-third to one-half of Washington's generals were Scottish, such as Arthur St. Clair, Alexander MacDugall, Lachlan MacIntosh and Richard Montgomery. Hugh Mercer, who was surgeon to Bonnie Prince Charlie at Culloden, and later to Washington, was killed at the Battle of Princeton. There were also the famous George Rogers Clark and "Mad Anthony" Wayne, Gen. John Stark at Bunker Hill, and Gen. Henry Knox, who captured and transported enough artillery to Boston to allow the Americans to drive the British out. Knox participated in nearly every important battle of the war and led the forces that wrested Trenton from the Hessians on Christmas night, 1776.

Then there was the Scot John Paul Jones, founder of the American Navy, conqueror of the *HMS Serapis*.

Of the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence, at least 21, or 38%, were Scots—this in an America where Scots constituted only 6.7% of the white population.



Ranches), Cyrus McCormick, Robert Fulton, **Jefferson Davis**, **Thomas Alva Edison**, **Alexander Graham Bell**, Samuel Morse, Horace Greeley, John Muir and Andrew McNally, were of Scottish descent (bolded name = pictured).

When the Americans met to decide whether to secede from the British empire, they did so in a Georgian building (now called Independence Hall) designed in part by Scot Andrew Hamilton, who once owned part of the square on which it rests. It was in response to Scot John Witherspoon that the declaration was signed, after it had been given to Thomas Jefferson, a relative of King Robert the Bruce, to draft. The final document was written in the hand of an Ulster Scot, Charles Thomson and was first printed by Ulsterman John Dunlap and publicly proclaimed by Ulsterman Capt. John Nixon, while Scot Andrew McNair rang the bell that came to be known as the Liberty Bell.

The constitutional convention of 1787, called by half-Scot Alexander Hamilton, was held to reform the Articles of Confederation. As usual, Scots were well overrepresented. Edmund Randolph, a great orator, of the noble Randolphs of Scotland, opened the meeting with a three-hour speech advocating essentially the form of government we have today. But the plan was unacceptable to the smaller states, and the response of Scot William Paterson was to put forth an alternative plan called the New Jersey plan, leading ultimately to the "Great Compromise."

James Madison, a part-Scot, was the most influential of all the delegates and is called the master architect of the U.S. Constitution. The Bill of Rights also was drafted by Madison, and Scottish-American Patrick Henry was largely responsible for its ratification. Our old friend John Dunlap was the first to print the Constitution.

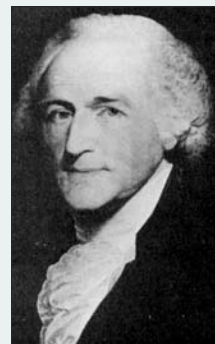
*The Federalist Papers* were written largely by Hamilton and Madison—printed by Archibald and John MacLean. The philosophy of the *Papers* has been traced to Scotland, and especially to David Hume.

During the Scottish Golden Age, during the latter part of the reign of Alexander II and the earlier years of Alexander III, little Scotland burst forth as the intellectual nucleus of civilization.

In 1986, brilliant scholar Daniel Bell said that the Scottish enlightenment had "emphasized the individual as the unit of society . . . and [that this] came to fruition in Anglo-

## This Scotsman Negotiated the Louisiana Purchase and Was First Secretary of State

Scottish-American Robert Livingston (1746-1813), shown here, was born in the city of New York in 1746, grew up to be an eminent lawyer. Livingston became politically active in the era of the Stamp Act resistance and was probably (along with his brother, William) involved with the Sons of Liberty in New York.



In 1776, as a member of the Provincial Congress of New York, he was selected to attend the Continental Congress. He was on the committee to draft the Declaration of Independence but was recalled by his state before he could sign it. Livingston was appointed secretary of foreign affairs (secretary of state) soon after the Articles of Confederation were adopted. He served in that post until 1783, when he was appointed chancellor of the state of New York. He was an advocate for the U.S. Constitution and served as a delegate to the New York convention held at Poughkeepsie in 1788 to ratify it. On April 30, 1789, Livingston administered the presidential oath of office to George Washington. Thomas Jefferson, first secretary of state and third president of the United States, was himself a descendant of a sister of King Robert I of Scotland.

In 1801, President Jefferson appointed Livingston resident minister to the court of Napoleon. It was he who negotiated the Louisiana Purchase from the French (with fellow Scot-American James Monroe, future U.S. president). They agreed to purchase 828,000 square miles for \$11,250,000 plus the assumption of \$3,750,000 in American claims against France—a total of \$15 million. For this price (perhaps the greatest real estate deal of all time) they bought what are now the states of Louisiana, Missouri, Iowa, Arkansas, Nebraska and most of Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, North and South Dakota, Wyoming, Minnesota and Montana. The purchase doubled the size of the country and provided for its westward expansion for less than three cents an acre. Livingston was also a patron of inventor Robert Fulton of steamboat fame.

## Thank the Scots for These Words

English words “galore” were borrowed from the Scots, including some pretty “snazzy” ones. Leaving aside those words that are mainly used in a Scottish context, some of these words might surprise you:

Baloney: From *béal ónna*, foolish talk.  
Big shot: *Séad*, pronounced “shod,” a jewel, figuratively a big chief.  
Bog: From the Scots Gaelic word *bog*, meaning soft or wet, a swamp or marsh.  
Blackmail: A form of extortion carried out by the border reivers (raiders along the Anglo-Scottish border, for nearly 300 years from the late 13th century to the end of the 16th century).  
Brat. (The meaning is the same in Scottish and English.)  
Brisk: From *brisg*.  
Bunkum: *Buanchumadh*, perpetual invention, long made-up tale.  
Bunny: From Gaelic *bun*, meaning stump, stock, root, hence the stumpy tail of a rabbit.  
Caddie or caddy.  
Clan: Borrowed from Gaelic *clann* (family, stock, off-spring), originally from Latin *planta* (sprout, root, scion).  
Cute: *Cíúta*, a clever quip, an ingenious trick.  
Dude: *Dúd*, numbskull.  
Gab, gob: From *gob*, mouth.  
Galore: From *gu leòr* = enough, plenty.  
Gimmick: *Camóg*, a crooked device; an equivocation, trick.  
Golf.  
Gumption: Common sense or shrewdness.  
Hoodoo: *Uath dubh*, dark specter, malevolent phantom.  
Hubbub: From *ubub*.  
Jazz: No, it's not from the African-Americans. This is the “English phonetic” spelling of the Irish and Scottish Gaelic word *teas*, meaning “heat and highest temperature.”  
Keen (wail): From *caoin*.  
Links: Sandy, rolling ground, from Old English *hlinc* (ridge).  
Moolah: *Moll óir*, pile of gold or money.  
Natty: *Néata*, neat, dapper.  
Pernickety: From *pernickety*.  
Pet: From *peata*, originally meaning a spoiled child.  
Pony, Raid and Rampage.  
Slew: A great number. From *sluagh*, an army, people.  
Slob.  
Slogan: From the *sluagh-ghairm*, battle cry.  
Smashing: From ‘*s math sin*’ = “that is good.”  
Smidgen: From “*smid*” a “syllable,” a small bit, *smidean* a very small bit (connected to Irish “*smidirin*,” smithereen).  
Snazzy: From *snas*, fashion.  
Spunk: *Spong*, originally meaning tinder or spark. Ultimately from Latin *spongia*, Greek *spoggia*, a sponge.  
Swanky: *Somhaoineach*, wealthy, profitable.  
Tripe: *Dríb*, filth.  
Trousers: From *triubhas* via “trews.”  
Whisky: From *uisge-beatha*, “water of life.”

American society.”

It is nearly impossible for the well-informed reader not to be moved by the breadth of Scottish contributions to American culture, as well as to world culture in general, and the many lessons we can learn from these remarkable sons of Europe. ♦

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## Scottish-Americans Played a Key Role In the New America

**When the United States were first formed and the 13 separate and sovereign states selected their first governors, nine were of Scottish ancestry:**

- Archibald Bulloch (Georgia);
- George Clinton (New York);
- William Livingston (New Jersey);
- John MacKinlay (Delaware);
- Jonathan Trumbull (Connecticut);
- Richard Caswell (North Carolina);
- Patrick Henry (Virginia);
- Thomas McKean (Pennsylvania); and
- John Rutledge (South Carolina).

**In addition, all the members of the first American cabinet had Scottish ancestry:**

- Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson;
- Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton;
- Secretary of War Henry Knox; and
- Attorney General Edmund Randolph.



# Highlanders Were Welcomed in the Old South

**T**HE FIRST U.S. CENSUS, TAKEN IN 1790, showed that people of Keltic descent outnumbered Anglo-Saxons by two to one in the South. About three-quarters of the white population of the American South before the Civil War were of Keltic (mostly Scottish) descent. It is not far-fetched to hear that the fearsome “rebel yell” that struck terror in the Yankee ranks during the War Between the States was derived from the piercing battle cries of the Highlanders.

Many Scottish immigrants settled in Georgia. English-born General James Edward Oglethorpe (1696-1785), the founder of Georgia, invited many of these hardy folks to defend his southern frontier. One incentive he used was the banning of Highland dress in Scotland. No such restrictions applied in the Colonies, where the



JAMES E. OGLETHORPE

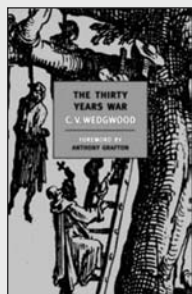
Highlanders could retain their language, customs and traditions and their characteristic way of dress. The general himself wore highland garb to visit some of the settlements.

However, no part of the American colonies was more attractive to Scottish settlers than North Carolina. Land grants to John Innes, Hugh Campbell and William Forbes in 1732 ensured a steady supply of immigrants. A letter written by a British minister visiting the Scottish settlements around Cross Creek (present-day Fayetteville) at the end of the century wrote, “The Gallic [sic] language is still prevalent among them;

their Negroes speak it, and they have a clergyman who preaches in it.” As late as 1851, it was reported in *The Raleigh Register* that many in the Scottish areas still spoke Gaelic. ♦

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