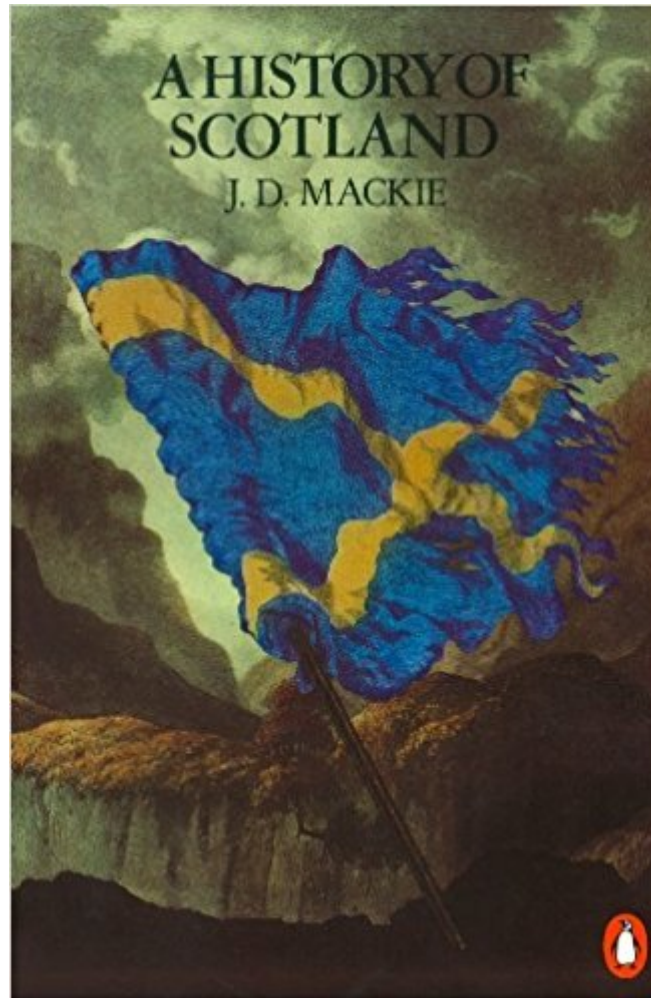




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A History Of Scotland (Penguin History)



Synopsis

A history that is equally entertaining and enlightening, illustrating all of the changes of power and intricacies that are necessary to understand the interrelation between England and Scotland and the Highland and Lowland populations. It shows how Duncan (1034-40) emerged from 'the union of the four peoples' as the first king of a united Scotland and provides detailed, reign-by-reign accounts from then on. Above all Professor Mackie reveals how the Scots long pursued an independent line - in religion, law, culture and foreign policy - that helped them keep at bay the Romans, the French and the English.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In advance of a trip to Scotland, I have been immersing myself in volumes of history about it, and I am comparing this fine volume by J.D. Mackie with that edited by Jenny Wormald, 'Scotland: A History', both in kindle format. Mackie's is evidently a great achievement - an entire history of Scotland written by a single person, rather than the collection of chapter contributions that forms 'Scotland: A History'. Mackie's style is enjoyable readable (if ever so slightly dated) and there are no sudden changes of gear, as sometimes strikes one in 'Scotland: A History'. Both are roughly the same size in terms of page count, but 'A History of Scotland' in a sense covers less but more deeply: it stops in the 1970s ('Scotland: A History' stops 30 years later) and contains only history (unlike the two thematic chapters - one, on the Scottish diaspora, rather thin in terms of content and the other, on Scottish literature, too specialised for a generalist volume of this kind - in

'Scotland: A History'). 'A History of Scotland' also, to my mind, contains much better coverage of the earliest periods of Scottish history including the period before the Roman conquest of Britain (i.e. the period that includes the Pictish civilisation) and the medieval period. Also very fine is the section on the religious turmoil of the 16th and 17th centuries. Both books start to lose focus to some extent in the 19th and 20th centuries, as though not quite enough time has elapsed even yet to see the events of those periods in their proper contexts. Mackie's volume is also largely arranged around the central figures of monarchs, and this approach leaves him in a bind when Scottish monarchs become less Scottish than British or, dare I say, English monarchs.

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