
Andrew Fletcher and The Treaty of Union

Posted by Jimbo - 2007/11/26 22:42

Now reading for the third time. A terrific book for anyone interested in this period of Scotland's history.

Gives a great insight into the years leading up to and just after The Treaty with excerpts from letters from some of the main protagonists on both sides. The English spy, Daniel Defoe features quite prominently throughout and much of what the ordinary Scot felt is seen through his eyes.

Much of the mood of the ordinary Scot then, would if read today, read like the nationalist letters in the comments section of Herald or Scotsman.

Even Defoe states that some of the nation had been driving a bargain for themselves, at the price of their country.

Defoe wrote:

That the figure of Scotland would make in the British Parliament would not like a kingdom but like a province; that one country in England, viz Cornwall, sent up to many members, one excepted as the whole Kingdom, and this was an external badge of their subjection and the like.

This was a general cry, and began to be very popular: The people cried out, they were Scotsmen and they would be Scotsmen still; they contemned the name of Britons, fit for the Welshmen, who were made the scoff of the English, after they had reduced them. Scotland had always had a name and fame in foreign Courts, they were naturalised in France*, enjoyed for many years great privileges there, and honours bought with the blood of their ancestors; and they would never give away their birthright, though some of the nation had been driving a bargain for themselves, at the price of their country. Thus they filled the mouths of the common people, who would go about the streets crying, 'no Union', and call the treaters traitors, and soon began to threaten them to their faces.

* Scots were in fact naturalised citizens of France. During the hundred years war with England, France was in dire need of allies and in 1419 an army of Scots set sail for France to fight against the English. For the next twenty or so years Scots fought in their thousands in France and it was so much appreciated by the French that all Scots were made citizens of France. It was obviously still the case in Defoe's time.

=====

Re:Andrew Fletcher and The Treaty of Union

Posted by dws - 2007/11/27 20:14

Jimbo, have you ever read John Prebble's works:-

Glencoe
Culloden
The Highland Clearances
Mutiny

I would recommend them to you as an excellent read, they not only take the view from a historian, but of the masses also.

=====

Re:Andrew Fletcher and The Treaty of Union

Posted by Jimbo - 2007/11/28 20:09

Hi dws,

I've read the first two and have to say that they were well researched and thoroughly enjoyable reading. My only complaint about Mr Prebble is that when reporting history of an England v Scotland nature he shows a certain amount bias.

My most read historians would probably be G W S Barrow and A A M Duncan. I would rate these two as probably the best Scottish historians ever to put pen to paper. If you read a book by Barrow and then read the same subject by Prebble, you'll know where I'm coming from.

=====

Re:Andrew Fletcher and The Treaty of Union

Posted by dws - 2007/11/28 21:04

Hi Jimbo,

Could you give me some title's so I can get them?

Cheers.:)

Re:Andrew Fletcher and The Treaty of Union

Posted by Hugh Trowsers - 2007/11/28 21:11

Barrow's "Robert the Bruce and the Community of the Realm of Scotland" is the greatest book on Scottish history ever written, I say, with loud voice and fragrant breath.

HT

Re:Andrew Fletcher and The Treaty of Union

Posted by Jimbo - 2007/11/28 23:54

Hi dws,

the title given by HT is probably the best book you'll ever read on Scotland's Wars of Independence. Barrow and Duncan are the recognised experts on this era of Scotland's history. Another book by Barrow well worth a read is The Kingdom of the Scots. This book takes you through the make up of pre-feudal Scotland to the times of Robert Bruce.

The Kingship of the Scots by A A M Duncan is excellent. Duncan is what I would call a historian's historian.

In this book Prof' Duncan puts forward the possibility that Malcolm III (victor over MacBeth) was the son of the king of Strathclyde. Throughout history the only record of Malcolm's genealogy was provided by Marianus Scotus (a Cologne monk) who claimed Malcolm was the son of Duncan. Since then all historians have taken Marianus' word as fact. Prof' Duncan has since found documentation from two contemporary but separate sources, William of Malmesbury and John of Worcester, who both assert that Malcolm was the son of the King of Strathclyde.

Prof' Duncan proposes that the house of Strathclyde may have lived on longer than was previously thought and perhaps did not die out with Owen at the battle of Carham in 1018.

I would advise you to attempt to obtain this book from a library. I don't think you can buy it for under £100.00 these days.

Other favourites of mine are David I by Richard Oram, The Black Douglas by I M Davis, Charles II by Antonia Fraser, Mary Queen of Scots by Antonia Fraser and The Gunpowder Plot also by Antonia Fraser.

Re:Andrew Fletcher and The Treaty of Union

Posted by dws - 2007/12/03 08:12

Thanks for the recommendations, guys. I'll endeavour to look them up.

dws.
