

BOOK REVIEWS



Tartanware
Souvenirs from Scotland
By Princess Ira Von Furstenberg
\$19.95/Pavilion/1997

Written by the granddaughter of the Duke and Duchess of Hamilton, this book is a coffee-table tour through Scottish kitsch. It is a small volume (72 pages, approximately 7" square), but it is full of color illustrations of the many types of crafts which have been embellished with tartan. Tartanware is anything covered in a rich tartan pattern, from sewing tools to shoelaces.

If you are interested in collecting tartanware or just looking for interesting accent pieces for your home, this book is a useful survey of the history and breadth of the tartanware phenomenon.

Distributed by Trafalgar Square, North Pomfret, VT 05053.

For the Lion
A History of the Scottish Wars of Independence 1296-1357
by Raymond Campbell Paterson
£9.95/John Donald Publishers Limited/1996

Although there have been many examinations of this turbulent period of Scottish history, this book deserves recognition for presenting a well-constructed and clear explanation of the facts and figures. Paterson has a fine understanding of the relationships between such key

players in the tale as Edward I, Robert the Bruce, Edward Balliol, and King David. He shows how Scotland's "Auld Alliance" with France was formed and used.

One of his more interesting insights is into the savvy of Robert the Bruce. He knew that Scotland could not hope to defeat England in direct battle, so he kept to guerilla tactics, using his resources to their greatest leverage in selective attacks.

His presentation is objective, an achievement since this kind of book can often get off-track with more sentimental arguments.

Distributed by John Donald Publishers Ltd, 138 St. Stephen Street, Edinburgh EH3 5AA, Scotland.

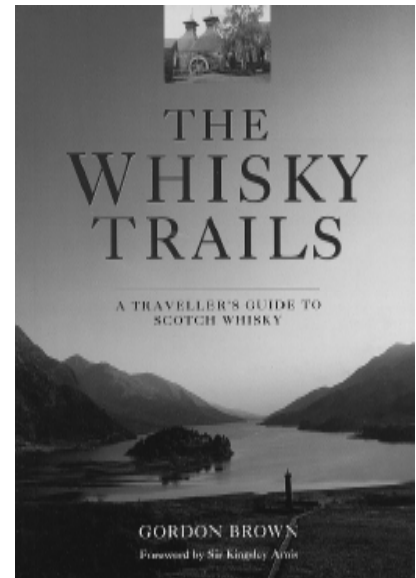
Gulfs of Blue Air
A Highland Journey
By Jim Crumley
\$35/Mainstream Publishing/1997

Whisky Trails
A Traveller's Guide to Scotch Whisky
By Gordon Brown
\$19.95/Prion/1997

The Great Glen Way
By Heather Connon & Paul Roper
\$23/Mainstream Publishing/1997

One of the more popular genres of publication coming from Scotland today is the Traveller's Guide. These guides are usually well illustrated, with all sorts of detail and personal anecdotes about travelling along a certain route or throughout a particular region.

Jim Crumley's *Gulfs of Blue Air* is a poetic journey beginning in Sheriffmuir and exploring places such as Rannoch Moor, the Mull of Kintyre, Ardnamurchan, Applecross, Dunadd, and the Skye Bridge. It is thoughtful and full of the real experiences of the trip including poems written through



particular inspiration and anecdotes about the locals he met.

The book is beautifully illustrated with a handful of striking color plates of the scenery he encountered. It is a pleasant read and a helpful guide.

Whisky Trails is a traveller's guide to over 100 different distilleries. The book offers details regarding visitation restrictions, the unique characteristics of the different whiskey types, and nearby places of interest. The entries include color photos and histories of each distillery.

A whisky trail can be created by selecting a series of sites near other places you wish to visit. This guide is ideal for anyone who truly appreciates fine Scotch Whisky and its origins.

The most interesting of the three guides is *The Great Glen Way*. This book is a detailed description of a 71 mile walking trail from Fort William to Inverness. The trail follows a natural break in the hills of the highlands, a fault line that produced Loch Lochy, Loch Oich, and Loch Ness and nearly separated northern Scotland into its own island. There are historical sites surrounding the exploits of Bonnie Prince Charlie as well as breathtaking nature views.

Detailed maps and the voice of experience make this guide an excellent preparation for this journey.

Distributed by Trafalgar Square, North Pomfret, VT 05053.

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U.S. SCOTS Magazine

MUSIC REVIEWS



Women of the World Celtic II

Compiled by Putumayo
Intercultural Niche Strategies
P.O. Box 1592
New York, NY 10028

There is nothing quite so magical as Gaelic tunes sung by a strong woman's voice. Some of the names you will have heard before Karen Matheson of Capercaillie and Eileen Ivers of Riverdance. Others are new to the international scene. Their origins cover Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Atlantic Canada, and the United States.

The music ranges from nearly a cappella to modern-day funky. Some of the strongest tracks are Mary Jane Lamond's funky *Bog A'Lochain* and Natalie MacMaster's world-beat *The Drunken Piper*, performed with the vocal assistance of Cookie Rankin of the Rankin Family.

This collection is a treasure trove of some of the best female English and Gaelic performers.

The Dougie MacLean Collection

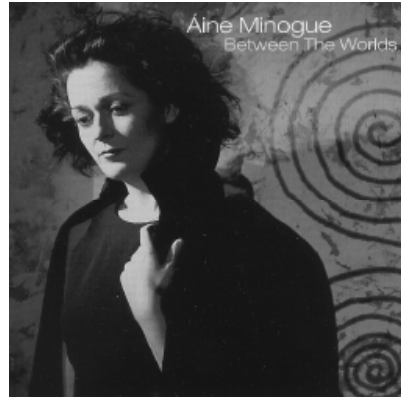
Putumayo World Music
627 Broadway
New York, NY 10012

Dougie MacLean is one of the premiere singer-songwriters living and creating in Scotland today. Personally very down-to-earth, Dougie's songs have touched listeners all over the world with their passionate lyrics and strong melodies.

The Dougie MacLean Collection

is a great way to get acquainted with his music. It is an anthology of the most popular and influential songs from seven of his earlier released CDs.

'Caledonia', from his first album, Craigie Dhu, is warm and sentimental and has become an unofficial anthem for Scotland.



Between the Worlds

Aine Minogue
Intercultural Niche Strategies
P.O. Box 1592
New York, NY 10028

It is ancient tradition among the Celtic peoples that the barrier between this life and the next is very thin. On the four fire festival days of the Celtic year, it is said that movement between these worlds is made easier. Aine Minogue explores these traditions in her own songs and traditional music.

The vocal tracks on this CD have a cool, ethereal quality. Two of the most interesting selections are *Rosemary Faire* and *Across the Universe*. The first, performed here with its traditional lyrics, is more commonly known as Scarborough Fair by Simon and Garfunkel. The second is a Lennon/McCartney song from 1970 which speaks quite directly to the transition between the worlds.

If you wish to submit a book or recording for review in U.S. Scots, send a copy of the work to U.S. Scots Reviews, P.O. Box 21587, Columbus, OH 43221-0587. Please note that they are not returnable and we cannot guarantee a review.

15 All-Time Favorites

Pipes & Drums of the
Washington Memorial Pipe Band
P.O. Box 249
Hatboro, PA 19040-0249

This CD contains fifteen of the most popular pipe-band tunes. These standards include such pieces as 'Amazing Grace' and 'She Moves Through the Fair'. While they lack some cohesion in their ensemble performance, the strength of their individual members makes this an enjoyable CD.



Raggles to Riches

The Prodigals
The Smiddy
Palace Road, Essendy,
Blairgowrie, Perthshire
PH10 6SB Scotland

Hailing from Scotland, Ireland, England, Wales, and Canada, the Prodigals come together to create a talented folk/rock sound with fiddle and flute leads. Their songs are full of energy and cover their own compositions and a few traditional tunes.

The Prodigals have earned a fine reputation in Scotland and Canada, and appear on many music programs in both countries. You can tell from the strength and energy of the CD that they would be a great band to see live.

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