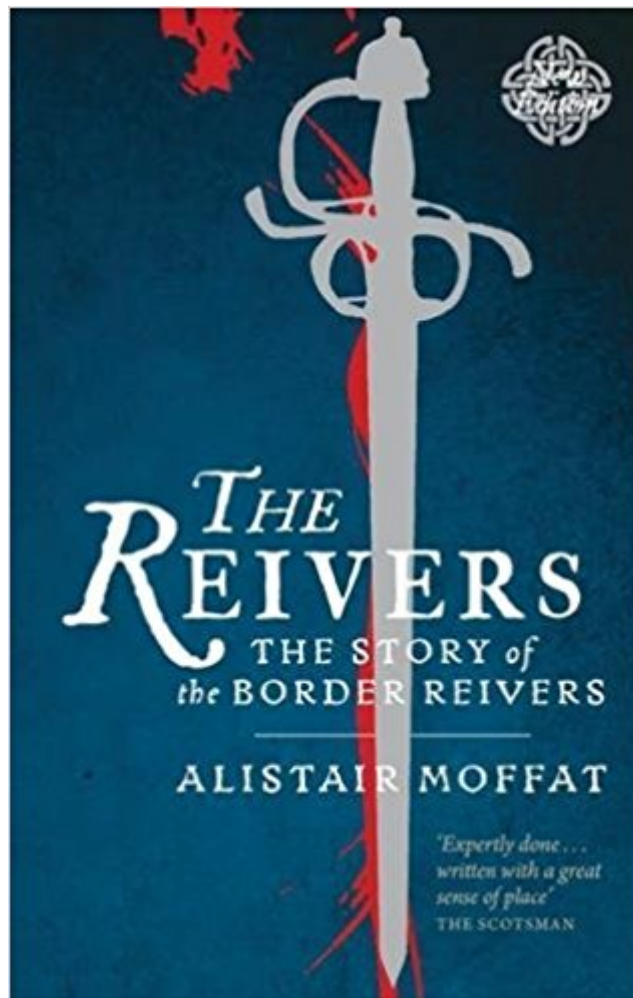




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The Reivers: The Story Of The Border Reivers



Synopsis

From the early fourteenth century to the end of the sixteenth, the Anglo-Scottish borderlands witnessed one of the most intense periods of warfare and disorder ever seen in modern Europe. As a consequence of near-constant conflict between England and Scotland, Borderers suffered at the hands of marauding armies, who ravaged the land, destroying crops, slaughtering cattle, burning settlements and killing indiscriminately. Forced by extreme circumstances, many Borderers took to reiving to ensure the survival of their families and communities, and for the best part of 300 years, countless raiding parties made their way over the border. The story of the Reivers is one of survival, stealth, treachery, ingenuity and deceit, expertly brought to life in Alistair Moffat's acclaimed book.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'This is a page-turning history, lucidly written, and it is enhanced by a selection of five famous Border ballads. One of the best reads of the year, without doubt' -- Hamish Coghill * Scottish Life *
'It is the passion and pride in the land of his birth that shine through in this superb new work' * Southern Reporter *
'This is a history as exciting and dramatic as the Border ballads themselves' * Cumberland News *
'a most compelling, thought-provoking and entertaining history' * The Herald *

Alistair Moffat was born and raised in Kelso. He took degrees at the universities of St Andrews, Edinburgh and London and played rugby for Kelso and his universities. In 1976 he took charge of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe as it grew into the largest arts festival in the world. He now lives in

Selkirk.

I learned about the Reivers for the first time on a recent vacation to Scotland. I was intrigued by our tour guide's interest in the subject. This book is exactly what I wanted to learn more about the who and what the Reivers were. The author lays out the reasons for the Reivers and then goes into a more detailed history. One thing I appreciate about this book is that the author, on almost every other page, blocks off a few words about the culture, the language, the off beat incidents from this period. The Reivers are in many ways the fore runners of our Wild west period in the Western United States. Learning about the Reivers is another way of learning about who we are and the precedent set by this period.

This is the best book out of the 3 I have read about the Border Reivers. Alistair Moffat gives a good history about the Borderlands, telling stories from both sides. He punctuates the history with facts and figures about life in the region. This trivia helps to give you a better view of this time and place. He starts the book with a fictional story about a raid just to give you a feel for what life was like. He ends the book with 5 appendixes full of facts about the era. In the chapters in between, he takes each topic though the era then goes back and and takes another topic or biography along to its end. I found this a little confusing which is why I only gave this 4 stars. But the facts are there, the stories are there, the people are there, the places are there, its all there about the life and times of the Border Reivers.

Writing is (At risk of being melodramatic) enthralling. As usual, information is well researched and dependable. Moffat's books are superb.

This turned out to be a much better read than I had expected. (Then again, I was mentally comparing it to *The Steel Bonnets*, which is the definitive work on the subject.) Moffat does a great job of exploring the Reivers' lifestyle based on exterior influences as well as the local wrinkles of living along the Border at that time in history. He does a better job of exploring the reiver psyche than most writers, which is important since with those fellows the mindset was everything when it came to explaining why they rode out. The boxed text on select terms also gave some interesting details which gave some context to words and their use. As a partial descendant from some Carrs, I am also indebted to Moffat for his extensive writings on the Kerrs, who apart from Fraser have not gotten a lot of mention in the current works.

This is probably my favorite book about the history of the Borders. The author's frequent use of story to bring the history alive is a wonderful thing. The asides that are set into boxes throughout the text help give the reader a lot of relevant information and "back story" although it overwhelms the story at times. I also enjoyed his book *The Borders*.

Very straight forward and easy to read history of the Reivers. Moffat's use of "side" information on such things as the weather, horse shoes and the Queens at the time, make for a very informative and enjoyable history.

I am a Genealogist and have been researching my family which is from the border of Scotland/England. The book helped me to understand the times my ancestors lived in. It was a very good read even if you do not have ancestors from there. Very exciting

Best book yet on the subject. This along with *The Steel Bonnets* pretty much covers it.

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