

## ENVIRONMENT & TRAVEL

### Tartan exodus

By Paul-Napoleon JACKSON

#### **Eighty per cent of Scots and their descendants live outside of Scotland.**



Ask people in almost any country what images and ideas they associate with Scotland, and most will reply whisky. Others will remember that “traditional dress” includes a dress (it’s a kilt, not a skirt). A few gourmets will love (or hate) haggis, and cinema goers of the 1990’s will remember Mel Gibson in blue war-paint as Scotland’s answer to Joan of Arc. But many authors and studies suggest that Scotland is better known for exporting her people than for exporting the fruit of her labour (or distilleries, if you prefer).

Much of this tartan “exodus” can be explained by History. Many Highland clans were forced to leave their lands in the second half of the eighteenth century, following the last uprising against rule by the Lowlanders and the English in 1745-46. The application of a deliberate policy of extermination – the “Highland Clearances”, is one reason why the current Chief of the Clan McFarlane lives in the USA. Others left in the British Army, including General Douglas Haig or the famous “Black Watch” regiment (the Germans took to calling the BW “women from Hell”), or as administrators, such as John Buchan, Governor General of Canada and author of “The Thirty-nine Steps”. And Ralph Dundas Tindal commanded the 3rd Regiment of Grenadiers of Napoléon I’s Imperial Guard in 1810-12.

Others, more modestly, sought work in Ireland or England, or achieved fame and fortune as actors (Sean Connery) or comedians (Billy Connolly) before settling in a variety of locations, generally in the extreme Northern or Southern Hemisphere. In the case of Connery, resident in the US, his marriage to a Frenchwoman is an interesting twist in the tradition of the Auld Alliance – an exchange of nationality, culture and occasionally, military, assistance. As for Connolly, who divides his time between the States, Australia (and a retreat in Scotland) his second wife’s family arrived in New Zealand a couple of generations ago, “fresh off the boat” from... Scotland.

As the author Robert Bruce once remarked, there are around 25 million people of primarily Scottish origin, of whom 5 million live in Scotland.

#### Sources:

*The Scottish Enlightenment: The Scots’ Invention of the Modern World*, Arthur Herman (London: Fourth Estate, 2002)

*Billy*, Pamela Stephenson (London: HarpersCollins, 2001)

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<http://www.rampantscotland.com/famous/famous.htm>

\*Search results for “The Scots” on google.com - **43,400,000**