



The Last Highlander: Scotland's Most Notorious Clan Chief, Rebel & Double Agent

Sarah Fraser

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Fans of C.J. Sansom must read this Saltire Society Literary Awards Scottish First Book of the Year – a great non-fiction adventure about Scotland's most notorious clan chief.

Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, was the last of the great Scottish chiefs – and the last nobleman executed for treason. Determined to seek his fortune with the exiled Jacobite king in France, Fraser acted as a spy for both the Stuarts and the Hanoverians; claimed to be both Protestant and Roman Catholic.

In July 1745, Bonnie Prince Charlie launched his last attempt to seize back the throne, supported by Fraser and his clans. They were defeated at Culloden. Fraser was found hiding in a tree.

This swashbuckling spy story recreates an extraordinary period of history in its retelling of Fraser's life. He is surely one of Scotland's most notorious and romantic figures, a cunning and ambitious soldier who died a martyr for his country and an independent Scotland.

The Last Highlander: Scotland's Most Notorious Clan Chief, Rebel & Double Agent Details

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Author : Sarah Fraser

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Delway Burton says

This is a dense read. It follows the career of Lord Lovat, "the last of Highlanders," who was executed for treason in 1747. He was a sort of double agent in the struggle between the Jacobites and the Stuarts which ended with the Battle of Culloden and the defeat of the Jacobites. This is a book only for those who are passionate about Scottish history. The series Outlander, now popular on TV, is taken from this period.

Samantha Bee says

An interesting look at Scotland's history in the late 17th/early 18th centuries. (I'd imagine Outlander fans might get something out of this?) I don't know nearly as much about Scottish history as I do about English, so this was mostly a good read for me. However, I didn't find it particularly easy to sympathize with Simon Fraser, as we find out fairly early on how he's willing to treat a woman. And the author frequently tends to embellish the story she's telling with no notes or anything to back up what she's describing, which is a massive pet peeve of mine... (History books should always have at least several pages of notes.)

Ron says

Not particularly interesting unless have background knowledge/interest in era.

Ronnie says

Interesting history of Lord Lovat, Simon Fraser, the last Jacobite leader to be beheaded. The last 50-70 pages were totally engrossing.

Mary says

This is very readable, enjoyable history of Scotland and Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, from the end of the 1600s through the uprising with Bonnie Prince Charlie, battle at Culloden and it's aftermath. It is also terribly sad reading with regard to the treatment of the Scots people by the English after Culloden.

Nina says

Non-fiction. Overly-detailed and dryly written chronology of a clan chieftain beheaded for treason at age 80 after the Battle of Culloden. Simon Fraser, aka Lord Lovat, (who appears in the fictional Outlander novel as

Jamie Fraser's grandfather), adopted and shed religions and political parties to whatever personal benefit he could gain. The times in England and Scotland in the 18th century were so full of intrigue, blackmail, deception, and shifting familial alliances, I don't know how anybody kept it all straight. The women, of course, were nothing but bargaining chips. It was interesting, however.

Kristoffer says

Bought this book after returning from a Hogmanay trip to Scotland. Did not go in with a lot of prior knowledge of Scottish history, just a piqued interest from my trip. This is a beefy book. Lots of changing/multiple names due to changing titles/deaths/marriages etc. I found it to be a very rewarding book. I just had to make sure I was paying close attention and not enjoying too much single malt while reading it. It is a great story chalked full of detail. Probably shouldn't be the very first book one picks up to boost their knowledge of 18th century Scotland though.

Kate says

When I bought this book, I knew next to nothing about Simon Fraser other than how he had been portrayed in the Starz series, Outlander. From the moment I turned the first page to closing the book on finishing, I really enjoyed reading about this infamous man.

The author's passion shines through with the research that has gone into this book. If you ever get to hear Sarah Fraser speak (which I have) then you will understand why she chose to write about her husband's ancestor (Sarah's husband is the current Lord Lovat)

Jane Massy says

Throws a light on a period in Scottish history which is so often recorded from the perspective of England as the main driver in setting up the United Kingdoms of England and Scotland. An extraordinary larger than life character and amazing few decades which need to be remembered in the current debate on Scotland's potential independence

William says

Incredible level of detail and empathy for Lord Lovat even though she does not excuse his indiscretions and disloyalty. As with other tales featuring the Jacobites, I was struck with the way BPCharlie just waltzed in, let everyone join in behind and die for him, when his aim -- the throne of Britain -- was not in line with theirs: Scottish independence. Especially when families and lifelong friends turned against each other, and espionage and intrigue ruled the day far beyond any real ideals that may have unified the Scots, one thing remained clear even though Sarah Fraser never stated it specifically: Charlie used them, their lives, their homes, their families, their wealth, and in Lovat's case at least he used Lovat's head. All in a futile and poorly conceived attempt to take the throne.

The story is crucial to understanding Highland rebellions of all kinds. I only give it a 4 because it got

cumbersome and slow. Took me a damn long time to read it.

Bill says

A biography of the 11th Lord Lovat who lived and died in the 16th and 17th centuries, this book contains extraordinary details of a complex life. The story is supported by numerous quotes from the original literature and makes fascinating reading. At times, I found it a little difficult to know which side some of the people were on but I think some of the characters would also have been a bit confused. As a historical account, this is an important work as well as an enjoyable read.

Stefan Redford says

Very interesting insight to the Jacobite rebellion. It gets a little confusing when the same person has many names and titles but once I came to grips with who was who in the zoo, I enjoyed the book immensely.

Penny says

This book is full to bursting with historical facts of the Jacobien uprising in Scotland in the 18th Century. Almost too full sometimes and takes a fair bit of concentration to read. However it is fascinating. It tells the story of Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat the leader of the Fraser Clan, and a man of intrigue, a bumbling ninny sometimes, eccentric, ambitious and really rather a remarkable character! He seemed to lead a charmed life, as he was sentenced to death as a young man, but managed to regain his freedom after an enormous amount of political rangling only to be sentenced again as an old man of 80! He had many many faults but you can't help having a lot of respect and admiration for a man who would not stop fighting to attain what he wanted, which was basically freedom and liberty for his clan and the people of his beloved Scotland. A really good story, really well researched and well written.
