

District ATHOLL

Gaelic Name

Athall

Tartan Designer Wilsons of Bannockburn

Date 1812

Atholl, a large basin on the south slope of the Grampian Mountains drains into the river Garry and Glen Garry. The historic route from Perthshire to Inverness enters Atholl through the gorge of Killiecrankie, the site of the defeat in 1689 of the government forces under General MacKay by John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, with his Highlanders. Home of the Stewarts, Robertsons and Murrays, Atholl is today seeing a resurgence of interest in its history. Blair Castle, home of the Duke of Atholl, houses one of the most complete collection of Highland weapons and armor to be found anywhere. Further north, Clan Robertson has opened a Clan museum.

The Atholl district tartan is one of the oldest. There may be a reference to it as early as 1619. When the Black Watch was formed the men apparently wore two tartans; the Government or Black Watch tartan for the long greacan-feile and the Atholl tartan for the little kilt, the feileadh-beag. In the early 1800's the sett was worn as a district tartan by the Chief of the Robertsons. More recently, the early tartan, with its distinctive red stripe has been identified with the northern Murrays and is today sold as Murray of Atholl. It was recorded in 1812 (W.P.B. Appendix 1802).

The present Duke of Atholl, Ian Murray, President of the Scottish Tartans Society, has stated that he is very happy for the Murray of Atholl tartan to be regarded as the Atholl District tartan.

Taken from "District Tartans of Scotland", by Gordon Teall & Philip Smith, Shephard-Walwyn (Publishers) Ltd.

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