

District CULLODEN

Gaelic Name

Cuil-lodair

Tartan Designer unknown

Date c. 1746 (or earlier)

Culloden, the last land battle on British soil, was fought near a farm on Drum Mossie Muir outside Inverness on 16 April 1746. It signaled the end of both the Jacobite cause and the Highland clan system. Here the small Jacobite army under Prince Charles Edward (Highlanders, Irish and Lowland Jacobites) were defeated by a larger, better equipped, and better led force of regulars and Scottish militia under the Duke of Cumberland. The end of the 'Forty-Five' rising brought proscription of the tartan and, even more long-lasting, laws which restricted the power of the clan chiefs and ended an entire way of life. The Culloden tartan was worn by a member of Prince Charles' staff during the battle but it is not known with which family or district it was first connected. It was first illustrated in *Old and Rare Scottish Tartans*, 1893 by D. W. Stewart who commented that

“despite an uncommon and daring color scheme, the general result is pleasing and effective.’

His son, D.C. Stewart, one of the founder members of Scottish Tartan Society, in his book *Setts of the Scottish Tartans* wrote:

‘We have seen that highly complex tartans were in vogue at the time of the final crash of Jacobite hopes, and here we have one which shows that the Highland love of exuberant color could express itself with admirable taste’.

Although the Culloden tartan has no direct link with the local population, it has now become firmly established as the district tartan for the area.

A number of modern ‘dress’ Culloden tartans have been designed recently which many women find attractive for evening wear.

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

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