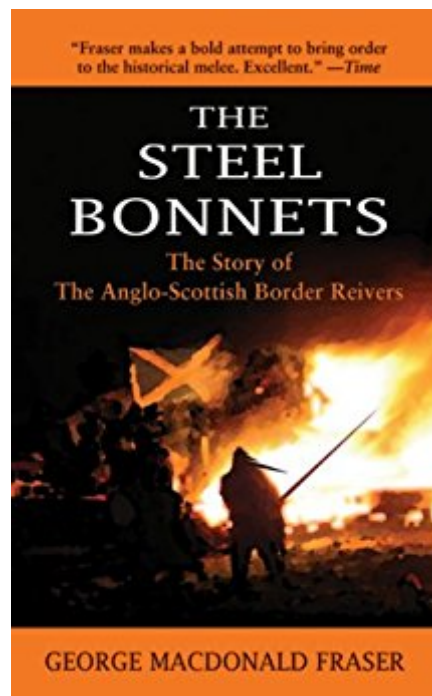


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# The Steel Bonnets: The Story Of The Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers



## Synopsis

From the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, outlaws reigned supreme on the contentious frontier between England and Scotland. Feud and terror, raid and reprisal, were the ordinary stuff of life—and a way of survival. Power was held by the notorious border reivers (the "steel bonnets," named for their flashy helmets), who robbed and murdered in the name of family: the famous clans (or "grains") like Elliot, Armstrong, Charlton, and Robson—romanticized by Sir Walter Scott. In *The Steel Bonnets*, George MacDonald Fraser, author of the bestselling *Flashman* novels, and himself a borderer, tells the fascinating and bloody story of the reivers, their rise to power as ferocious soldiers of horse, and their surprisingly sudden fall from grace.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Not a *Flashman* tale but a serious look at border troubles. I really don't know why I waited so long to read this book, a fan of GMF's fictionalized histories since a teenager, this one of his serious forays into history writing is a joy to read. This compact yet detailed story of the 'Reavers' is a must read for those interested in history, and suddenly topical again as Scottish and English borders are once more under discussion. Those looking for a romantic retelling of bold deeds will be disappointed, the

author makes it plain this was a brutal and nasty time and place. If you haven't read this book, read it, and if you have read it before, read it again.

The hard families on the border and the settling of the U.S. come together in this book. The names are very familiar and their contribution can easily be seen. Scots, English names that drove history and still drive America. National figures and neighborhood friends with the same name and drive to succeed.

This was not an easy read but well worth it. Fraser brought the people of the Border to life. I found myself shaking my head in amazement as I read. I admired the determination of people who found a way to survive the violence, the feuds, the robberies, the uncertainty. I felt a kind of admiration for their tenacity and determination to prevail. At the same time, I can't imagine the fear that families may have felt when night fell and your family might be the one that would fall prey to the riders. I liked Fraser's attempt to balance the myths about the Border Reivers and the actual reported events.

I was very happy to receive this excellent quality book on time. I had lost my original hardback copy and was devastated. I was not sure what the paper copy would be like, but the book is in good condition- looks new. Very good book and service. It details the history of the west Border clans in Scotland, and I am looking forward to rereading this book. The most famous ones are the Maxwells, Nixons, Johnstons, grahams and others whose facial structure remains the same today. Think of Richard Nixon, Billy Graham, and Lyndon Johnson. That is what they all looked like and still do. They led a hard life, and this gives a good historical understanding of these feuding clans. I have started but not finished it but it is an excellent book.

I love the author, his Flashman series is really fun and the history plausible. This was interesting, but really went into the weeds. Granted, it is a confusing period, but more coherence and some tighter themes would help in understanding this interesting period. Good if you are really interested in the Borderers in their most chaotic time, not so much if you aren't.

A good read, very in-depth look at the border life of Scots and English in the 1600-1700 Era. Reads like a text book at times but the stories are worth the time. One of my ancestors is mentioned in one small paragraph so that was an unexpected surprise.

I found the book to be full of information about the time period and region, yet always interesting and entertaining. I'd recommend this as an introduction to the Borders and Border Reivers. Very enjoyable reading.

great book, great service

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