

Scotland

Population and cities

It occupies the northern part of the island of GB. The population (over 5 million) is concentrated in the heavily industrialised central lowlands, which occupy the valleys of the Clyde and Forth. Scotland is the land of many special traditions - playing the pipe, quality tweeds, wearing kilts made of tartan, woollen knitwear, Scotch whisky (Gaelic word "the water of life"); golf. The capital city is **Edinburgh**.

History

The **Picts** and **Celts** were the oldest inhabitants, the Scots came from Northern Ireland, the Britons (Anglo-Saxons) and Angles (from Germany). Frequent wars with England ended when the two crowns were united in 1603 under **James I** of England (**James VI of Scotland**). Their Parliaments were united in 1707. In a referendum in 1979 the Scots rejected devolution for their country.

Industry

Tourism is a major industry and the discovery of North Sea oil (fields - Forties) has brought new prosperity to some parts of the country. Main industries - **oil, electronics, shipbuilding, textiles, whisky, engineering** concentrated in the central lowlands. Main farm produce - **cereals, wool, beef, lamb**.

Geography

The Scottish Highlands are the most mountainous area of GB with Ben Nevis 1343m, the highest peak of the British Isles. Grampian Mountains and the magnificent lakes - the biggest **Loch Lomond** and **Loch Ness** is famous for its "Loch Ness Monster".

The biggest city is **Glasgow** - old Victorian town, cultural centre (festivals, museums, art galleries) standing on the River Clyde, Centre of shipbuilding trade. Football clubs Glasgow Rangers, Celtic.

Edinburgh - government and commercial centre, famous castle from the 12th century, Holyroodhouse-official seat of the kings.

Aberdeen - fishing port, **Dundee** - cakes, marmalade, salmon river Tay
Gretna Green - young people come here to get married, because in Scotland you can get married without your parents' permission at 16, while in England the age is 18.

Symbols

National poet - **Robert Burns**

national meal - **Haggis** - made from sheep heart, lungs and livers

traditional costume - **kilt** - special woollen material (tartan), different pattern for each clan

The national symbol is **thistle** and the patron saint is **St. Andrew**.