

Term	Explanation
Aide-de-camp	French term translated as "Camp assistant". A military officer appointed as secretary and confidential assistant to a general or equivalent rank.
Annales of Trokelowe	A chronicle covering the period 1259 to 1323, written sometime after 1330 by John of Trokelowe, a Benedictine monk at St Albans. Further text was subsequently written by Henry de Blanford
Arquebus	An early muzzle-loading firearm, popular from the 15th-17th centuries. Comprising, a long smoothbore barrel with a wooden stock, it was a successor to the hand-cannon and precursor to the later muskets and rifles. Originally equipped with a matchlock firing mechanism, this would be superseded by the wheel lock and then the flintlock mechanisms.
Arquebusier	A soldier trained in the use of the arquebus.
Assured men	Scottish Borderers who had sworn allegiance to the English crown.
Baggage train	The baggage train of an army was its logistical heart, and could be a substantial size. In addition to vehicles carrying supplies and vital equipment for the army, there would also be a variety of camp followers. These could include tradesmen such as armourers and blacksmiths, servants of the soldiers and officers in the army and even the wives and families of the troops. On many occasions, those people who had lost their homes or livelihoods as a result of the actions of war would also be found within the train, looking both for protection and what work they could find to survive.
Barbour, John	A 14th century Scots poet and writer of The Brus, a long narrative account of the Scottish Wars of Independence and the role of Robert Bruce and the Black Douglas in them.
Bataille	See: Battalion
Battalion	A large, cohesive body of soldiers or combatants, under a central command.
Battle	See: Battalion
Bill	A weapon derived from the agricultural billhook, the bill was a polearm which was particularly used by the English, although also appearing in other countries. It comprises a long staff topped with a heavy chopping blade, with a hook on the rear edge and sometimes a point at the tip. This allowed it to work in manner similar to a combination of spear and axe, and was useful against heavily armoured cavalry as it could drag the rider from his saddle as he passed.
Billhook	See: Bill

Boece, Hector	A 16th century Scottish philosopher and the first Principal of King's College, Aberdeen. In 1527 he published the <i>Historia Gentis Scotorum</i> (History of the Scottish People), which remains his most famous publication.
Bonnie Prince Charlie	Charles Edward Stuart, also known as the Young Pretender, was an heir of the exiled Stuart dynasty, being the grandson of the former King, James II and VII and personally led the 1745 Jacobite Rising.
Burgess	A freeman of the burgh. Generally an individual of reasonable wealth and status.
Carbine	A muzzle loading firearm similar to the musket and arquebus, but with a considerably shorter length to enable its effective use by mounted forces.
Case shot	Also known as canister shot. An artillery round designed for close quarters combat, case shot consisted of a metal tube filled with smaller projectiles, such as musket balls, scrap metal or nails. When fired by the cannon, the metal outer case would disintegrate and send the smaller projectiles towards the enemy in a wide spread. While ineffective at longer ranges, when used against an enemy at close range the effect was both devastating and horrific.
Coehorn mortar	An artillery piece invented by Baron Menno von Coehorn, a Dutch military engineer. A mortar is an indirect fire weapon, launching rounds at a very steep angle into the air from where they subsequently fall onto the target. Designed originally as a siege weapon, early mortars were large and heavy. However, Coehorn's design attached a small mortar to a solid base plinth, which could then be transported and manipulated by as few as four men, allowing it to also be utilised as a field artillery piece in battle.
Commission	A document issued by a sovereign authority bestowing certain duties upon an individual.
Committee of Estates	The Committee of Estates was a body appointed to run the affairs of Scotland when the Parliament was not in session. Its primary purpose was an active role in the defence of the country.
Conventicle	A religious gathering of Covenanters held in the open air. During the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, conventicles were used by the dissenting Covenanters as a combination of religious ceremony and political rally. They were generally held in a remote location to avoid the authorities, a tactic which was not always successful.
Covenanters	A large group of Scottish Presbyterians who were opposed to attempts by the Stuart dynasty to interfere in Scottish religious matters. Named after the National Covenant, the Covenanters would play an influential role in the political and military upheavals of the following decades.

Dirk	The dirk is a dagger around 30cm in length with a single edged blade and often ornately decorated. Used by Highland warriors in the left hand in combination with the targe and broadsword.
Dragoon	Originally a mounted infantry unit, although in later years the term came to mean light cavalry. Generally not as effective as heavy cavalry in fulfilling a traditional mounted role, dragoons were a useful force as they offered flexibility and speed of movement, and for this reason were often deployed in a scouting or rapid response role. While they could fight from horseback it was common to find them fighting dismounted as infantry.
Ell	An ell was a unit of measurement, equated to the length of a man's arm, but in reality varying in length across Europe. For example, the Scottish ell was around 94cm in length (37 imperial inches), while the English was 1.14m (45 imperial inches).
Epaulette	An ornamental shoulder piece used to denote military rank.
Episcopacy	The governing of the Church by a hierarchical structure of bishops. Staunchly opposed by presbyterians who supported a system of Church governance without hierarchy.
Episcopalianism	See: Episcopacy
Forlorn hope	A body of combatants chosen or volunteering to participate in a military operation where the risk of death or serious injury is extremely high, such as the assault of a well defended strongpoint or the defence of an isolated outwork.
Grape shot	Similar to case shot, although generally containing larger iron balls within the case and predominantly used in naval warfare.
Grenadier	A specialist soldier, generally selected from among the strongest and fittest members of the army and trained for assault operations and in the use of grenades.
Hagbutt	See: Arquebus
Hagbutter	See: Arquebusier
Hanoverian	Supporters of the Hanover dynasty, the ruling monarchy of Great Britain from 1714 to 1901. George I succeeded to the throne with death of Queen Anne, eldest surviving daughter of the exiled James II and VII. The Hanoverian line continued to be opposed by the supporters of the exiled Stuart line until the final Jacobite defeat at Culloden.
Head-dyke	A field boundary used to separate agricultural land around a township from the rough grazing beyond.

Highland charge	A shock infantry tactic deployed by Highland levies for large parts of the 17th and 18th centuries. The tactic, allegedly developed by Alistair mac Colla during Montrose's campaigns in the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, was to rapidly close with the enemy and engage in melee combat. At a time when the majority of troops were engaging in firearm combat at range, the highlanders held a distinct advantage at close quarters. By charging as quickly as possible and rapidly closing the distance between themselves and the enemy, they reduced the time the enemy force could subject them to effective musketry fire. Those Highlanders armed with firearms would stop to fire a single shot once within musket range, before dropping their guns and continuing to close with the enemy. At its most effective, the momentum and collision of the charge with the enemy line could shatter their ranks and easily drive them off, as at Killiecrankie. However, if the opposing troops held their discipline and ground, the tactic could be countered, as demonstrated by the failure at Culloden.
Jack	A type of armour from the late Middle Ages. A jack consists of two or three layers of quilted cloth, into which plates of metal are stitched or rivetted.
Jacobite	A supporter of the exiled Stuart king James II and VII and his descendants. The name derives from the Latin for James, <i>Jacobus</i> .
Leat	Another term for lade, the channel used to supply and control water flow to a water powered mill.
Leather gun	A type of mobile artillery from the 17th century, also called a leather cannon. Created by binding rope and leather around a central metal tube in an attempt to make a lighter form of artillery than the heavy metal cannons in use on battlefields at the time. Despite their ineffectiveness and inherent flaws they were fairly common in Scotland thanks to the experiences of a variety of Scottish officers, who had served under Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden when he was experimenting with the use of such ordnance in the 1620s.
Militia	A military force comprising ordinary citizens, typically less effective than trained soldiers in a standing army. Militias can vary drastically in form and ability. For example, they can consist of either volunteers or draftees, they may serve and train part-time outside of emergencies or simply be called into action without any preparation when required.
Monymusk Reliquary	An early Christian reliquary, believed to date from around the 8th century. Reliquaries were small caskets used to hold precious relics of saints, such as bones or pieces of clothing. The Monymusk reliquary is a house-shaped wooden casket covered in thin plates of bronze and silver and is now empty. Traditionally associated with the Breccbennach of St Columba, which was carried into battle with the Scottish army.

Moss troopers	The moss troopers were a group of marauders and bandits within the border regions of Scotland and England, in a similar vein to the Border Reivers. During and after the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, moss troopers are known to have been in operation. They were so called because of the boggy nature of much of the land where they camped and operated. Many moss troopers were believed to have been survivors or deserters from Scottish armies, who had kept their weapons and equipment and turned to a life of plunder.
Muster roll	A register of the officers and men present within a body of soldiers.
National Covenant	The document inaugurated and signed by many of Scotland's nobility, clergy and burgesses in a ceremony at Greyfriar's Kirkyard in Edinburgh on 28 February 1638. Many further Scots would sign copies sent around the country. Its purpose was to declare opposition to the attempts by Charles I and Archbishop Laud to reform religious worship in Scotland.
Oath of Abjuration	An oath sworn in England by Parliament, the clergy and laymen to denounce the rights of the Stuart dynasty and support the accession of William of Orange to the throne. Similar oaths were also sworn in favour of George I and George III.
Parley	A discussion or conference between opposing sides , to discuss terms of truce, surrender etc.
Parliamentarian	A supporter of the English parliament in the Wars of the Three Kingdoms.
Pike	A pike is a polearm weapon of a form like a very long spear. Lengths could vary from 3m to around 7m. Pikes were highly effective against cavalry, and generally were used in a hedgehog formation, presenting a thick wall of spear points to the enemy force while keeping him at a distance and a highly trained pike troop could be a devastating force on the field.
Piquet	A forward outpost of soldiers, providing advance warning of enemy activity or a forward position for fire upon an enemy force.
Presbyterianism	The dominant form of religious worship in Scotland following the Reformation of the 16th century. Rejecting the authority of bishops, instead following a route where the church is governed by representatives of the population at all levels.
Primogeniture	The right of the eldest heir, generally male, to inherit the entire estate of his parents, to the exclusion of any younger siblings. In the event of there being no valid direct descendant, the inheritance passes to other close relations, starting with the most senior.
Quart de Conversion	A term for a troop or army column performing a roughly 90 degree turn into line.

Ravelin	A ravelin is a triangular fortification or outwork, generally of small size, designed to allow covered fire on an approaching enemy. The salient angle would face the enemy and would be fortified with a rampart, however the side facing rearwards was generally unfortified or poorly fortified to prevent the enemy being able to use the ravelin if it fell. The angles of the fortification also worked to deflect rather than stop incoming enemy artillery fire, allowing them to be of much more lightweight construction than a fortification designed to withstand direct fire.
Reformation	The Protestant Reform movement which spread across Europe in the 16th century. Rejecting the authority of the Papal states, the reformers often met with torture and death for their beliefs. In Scotland, the Scots Confession of 1560 formally established the new faith as the prominent religion in the country, although it was not enacted as law until 1567.
Round shot	Round shot is a solid, spherical ammunition, without any explosive charge and originally composed from dressed stone, later replaced by iron. Used to attack entrenched positions and at long range against troop formations.
Rout	A rout is a disorganised and often chaotic retreat from a field of battle. Such disorganised withdrawals generally result in the death or capture of many of the fleeing troops to the pursuing enemy.
Royalist	A supporter of Charles I in the Wars of the Three Kingdoms.
Salet	A type of war helmet popular in the 15th and 16th century. It offered more freedom of movement for the head than the contemporary barbute, but the sallet left the front of the neck and the jaw exposed and were often worn in conjunction with a padded gorget known as a bevor .
Scalachronicon	See: Scalacronica
Scalacronica	The Scalacronica is a chronicle written by Sir Thomas Gray of Heton, the Warden of Norham Castle and documenting the history of England up to 1362. Gray began the work while imprisoned at Edinburgh Castle following his capture in 1355, where he took to studying the works of early writers such as Bede, and he would continue to work on it following his release in 1357. It covers a large period of the Scottish Wars of Independence, and is drawn from other documentary sources, along with elements from Gray's own experiences and those of his father he had been told earlier in his life.
Schiltron	A compact body of pike or spear wielding troops, tightly packed together to form a phalanx. The tactic is most commonly associated with Scottish troops in the Middle Ages, but was utilised elsewhere. The closely packed ranks of men, with spears pointing outwards, is extremely resilient to cavalry attack and is effective against both cavalry and infantry. It is, however, extremely vulnerable to archery.

Scorched earth	A scorched earth policy is a military tactic of destroying anything that an opposition army could use in its efforts. This can include destroying crops and livestock, sabotaging transportation routes and destroying potential shelters and strongholds.
Slough	A low lying area of soft, boggy ground and standing water.
Sma' Folk	The Sma' Folk is the Scottish term generally used to describe the range of camp followers, tradesmen, families and those displaced by a war, who were found along with any large medieval army. On occasion, the Sma' Folk played an active role in the combat, but they generally only played a support and logistical role during a conflict.
Solemn League and Covenant	The successor to the National Covenant, the Solemn League and Covenant was signed in 1643. It allied the Covenanters with the English Parliament against the Royalists on condition that the system of church governance in Scotland was also adopted in England.
Statistical Accounts	The <i>Statistical Accounts</i> are a set of accounts of each parish in Scotland, compiled by the minister of the parish. The <i>Old Statistical Account</i> was compiled between 1791 and 1799 under the direction of Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, while the <i>New Statistical Account</i> was compiled between 1834 and 1845.
Suzerainty	The situation whereby a weaker region or power is made tributary to a stronger while being permitted a limited amount of autonomy in their affairs. The dominant power in the relationship is known as the suzerain.
The Brut Chronicle	A prose work of the history of England from its earliest origins until 1272 in its original form, with further updated text taking it to 1461. Written in a dramatic, chivalric style, it served as the standard history of England into the Renaissance period.
The Disinherited	The Disinherited were a group of Scots nobles and landowners who lost their claims within Scotland following the battle of Bannockburn. Robert Bruce issued a declaration in November 1314 that those Scots who had fought with the English at the battle, and those who owned lands on both sides of the border who had not sworn allegiance to him as sovereign, would forfeit their lands in Scotland. As part of the Second Scottish Wars of Independence, the Disinherited attempted to regain control of their lands through force, with the secret backing of the English authorities.
The Rough Wooing	The War of the Rough Wooing was a period of Anglo-Scots conflict between 1543 and 1550. It was an attempt by Henry VIII to force a marriage between the then infant Mary, Queen of Scots and his son Edward. Despite the brutal nature of the English raids, the plan would backfire when Mary was taken to France and became betrothed to the French Dauphin.

Treaty of Breda	The Treaty of Breda was an agreement signed in 1650 between the exiled Charles II and the Scottish Covenanters. Following the execution of Charles I and the repeated failure of the Covenanters to have their political aims met by their English Parliamentary allies, the Covenanters chose to enter an agreement with Charles II to support his cause.
Treaty of Northampton	Also known as the Treaty of Edinburgh-Northampton. The peace treaty signed and ratified in 1328 between England and Scotland, recognising the kingdom of Scotland as an independent nation and relinquishing English claims to the throne.
Wars of the Three Kingdoms	The period of conflict in the British Isles and Ireland between 1639 and 1651. Although often erroneously known as the English Civil War, the period actually encompassed several different conflicts, including the Bishops Wars, the English Civil Wars, the Scottish Civil War and the Irish Confederate Wars.