

MACGILLIVRAY

Source: The Scottish Highlands, Highland Clans and Highland Regiments, Volume II (of 2) by Sir John Scott Keltie

The Macgillivrays were one of the oldest and most important of the septs of clan Chattan, and from 1626, when their head, Ferquhard MacAllister, acquired a right to the lands of Dunmaglass, frequent mention of them is found in extant documents, registers, etc. Their ancestor placed himself and his posterity under the protection of the Mackintoshes in the time of Ferquhard, fifth chief of Mackintosh, and the clan have ever distinguished themselves by their prowess and bravery. One of them is mentioned as having been killed in a battle with the Camerons about the year 1330, but perhaps the best known of the heads of this clan was Alexander, fourth in descent from the Ferquhard who acquired Dunmaglass. This gentleman was selected by Lady Mackintosh to head her husband's clan on the side of Prince Charlie in the '45. He acquitted himself with the greatest credit, but lost his life, as did all his officers except three, in the battle of Culloden. In the brave but rash charge made by his battalion against the English line, he fell, shot through the heart, in the centre of Barrel's regiment. His body, after lying for some weeks in a pit where it had been thrown with others by the English soldiers, was taken up by his friends and buried across the threshold of the kirk of Petty. His brother William was also a warrior, and gained the rank of captain in the old 89th regiment, raised about 1758. One of the three officers of the Mackintosh battalion who escaped from Culloden was a kinsman of these two brothers,—Farquhar of Dalcrombie, whose grandson, Niel John M'Gillivray of Dunmaglass, is the present head of the clan.

The M'Gillivrays possessed at various times, besides Dunmaglass, the lands of Aberchallader, Letterchallen, Largs, Faillie, Dalcrombie, and Daviot. It was in connection with the succession to Faillie that Lord Ardmillan's well-known decision was given in 1860 respecting the legal status of a clan.

In a Gaelic lament for the slain at Culloden the MacGillivrays are spoken of as

"The warlike race,

The gentle, vigorous, flourishing,

Active, of great fame, beloved,

The race that will not wither, and has descended

Long from every side,

Excellent MacGillivrays of the Doune."