

## Macmillan.

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

Of the origin and history of the Macmillans, little seems to be known. According to Buchanan of Auchmar, they are descended from the second son of Aurelan, seventh laird of Buchanan. According to Mr Skene, the earliest seat of the Macmillans appears to have been on both sides of Loch Arkaig, and he thinks this confirmatory of a clan tradition, that they are connected with the clan Chattan. The Macmillans were at one time dependent on the Lords of the Isles, but when Loch Arkaig came into possession of the Camerons, they became dependent on the latter. "Another branch of this clan," says Skene, "possessed the greater part of southern Knapdale, where their chief was known under the title of Macmillan of Knap; and although the family is now extinct, many records of their former power are to be found in that district." We take the liberty of quoting further from Mr Skene as to the history of the Macmillans.

"One of the towers of that fine ancient edifice, Castle Sweyn, bears the name of Macmillan's Tower, and there is a stone cross in the old churchyard of Kilmoray Knap, upwards of twelve feet high, richly sculptured, which has upon one side the representation of an Highland chief engaged in hunting the deer, having the following inscription in ancient Saxon characters underneath the figure:—*Hæc est crux Alexandri Macmillan.*' Although the Macmillans were at a very early period in Knapdale, they probably obtained the greater part of their possessions there by marriage with the heiress of the chief of the Macneills, in the 16th century. Tradition asserts that these Knapdale Macmillans came originally from Lochtay-side, and that they formerly possessed Lawers, on the north side of that loch, from which they were driven by Chalmers of Lawers, in the reign of David II.

"As there is little reason to doubt the accuracy of the tradition, it would appear that this branch of the Macmillans had been removed by Malcolm IV. from North Moray, and placed in the crown lands of Strathtay. Macmillan is said to have had the charter of his lands in Knapdale engraved in the Gaelic language and character upon a rock at the extremity of his estate; and tradition reports that the last of the name, in order to prevent the prostitution of his wife, butchered her admirer, and was obliged in consequence to abscond. On the extinction of the family of the [235] chief, the next branch, Macmillan of Dunmore, assumed the title of Macmillan of Macmillan, but that family is now also extinct.

"Although the Macmillans appear at one time to have been a clan of considerable importance, yet as latterly they became mere dependants upon their more powerful neighbours, who possessed the superiority of their lands, and as their principal families are now extinct, no records of their history have come down to us, nor do we know what share they took in the various great events of Highland history. Their property, upon the extinction of the family of the chief, was contended for by the Campbells and Macneills, the latter of whom were a powerful clan in North Knapdale, but the contest was, by compromise, decided in favour of the former. It continued in the same family till the year 1775, when, after the death of the tenth possessor, the estate was purchased by Sir Archibald Campbell of Inverniel."

There have been a considerable number of Macmillans long settled in Galloway, and the tradition is that they are descendants of an offshoot from the northern Macmillans, that went south about the time the Knapdale branch migrated from Lochtay side. These Macmillans are famous in the annals of the Covenanters, and are mentioned by Wodrow as having acted a prominent part during the times of the religious persecution in Scotland. Indeed, we believe that formerly, if not indeed even unto this day, the modern representatives of the Covenanters in Galloway are as often called "Macmillanites" as "Cameronians."

### FOOTNOTES:

[202]Gregory's Highlands and Isles of Scotland, p. 75.

[203]A view of Locharkaig will be found at p. 709, vol. i.

[204]As to Mr Skene's theory of the captainship of a clan, see the account of clan Chattan.

[205]Although Sir Ewen, with his clan, had joined Lord Dundee in the service of the abdicated king, yet his second son was a captain in the Scots Fusileers, and served with Mackay on the side of the government. As the general was observing the Highland army drawn up on the face of a hill to the westward of the great pass, he turned round to young Cameron, who stood near him, and pointing to his clansmen, said, "There is your father with his wild savages; how would you like to be with him?" "It signifies little," replied Cameron, "what I would like; but I recommend it to you to be prepared, or perhaps my father and his wild savages may be nearer to you before night than you would like." And so indeed it happened.—Stewart's Sketches, vol. i. p. 66.

[206]For the foregoing account of the achievements of Sir Ewen Cameron we have been chiefly indebted to General Stewart's valuable work on the Highlanders and Highland Regiments.

[207]The portrait of the "gentle Lochiel" will be found at p. 519, vol. i.

[208]For details, see account of the 92d Regiment.

[209]Highlands and Isles of Scotland, p. 259.

[210]History of the Origin of the Clans, p. 84.

[211]Heraldry, vol. i. p. 419.

[212]Vol. i. p. 577.

[213]See account of the Macdougals.

[214]Smibert's Clans.

[215]See the History of the 42d Regiment, in Part Third.