

## MACNAUGHTON

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

The MS. of 1450 deduces the descent of the heads of this clan from Nachtan Mor, who is supposed to have lived in the 10th century. The Gaelic name Neachtain is the same as the Pictish Nectan, celebrated in the Pictish Chronicle as one of the great Celtic divisions in Scotland, and the appellation is among the most ancient in the north of Ireland, the original seat of the Cruithen Picts. According to Buchanan of Auchmar,[210] the heads of this clan were for ages thanes of Loch Tay, and possessed all the country between the south side of Loch-Fyne and Lochawe, parts of which were Glenira, Glenshira, Glenfine, and other places, while their principal seat was Dunderraw on Loch-Fyne.

In the reign of Robert III., Maurice or Morice Macnaughton had a charter from Colin Campbell of Lochow of sundry lands in Over Lochow, but their first settlement in Argyleshire, in the central parts of which their lands latterly wholly lay, took place long before this. When Malcolm the Maiden attempted[230] to civilise the ancient province of Moray, by introducing Norman and Saxon families, such as the Bissets, the Comyns, &c., in the place of the rude Celtic natives whom he had expatriated to the south, he gave lands in or near Strathday or Strathspey, to Nachtan of Moray, for those he had held in that province. He had there a residence called Dunnachtan castle. Nesbit[211] describes this Nachtan as "an eminent man in the time of Malcolm IV.," and says that he "was in great esteem with the family of Lochawe, to whom he was very assistant in them wars with the Macdougals, for which he was rewarded with sundry lands." The family of Lochawe here mentioned were the Campbells.

The Macnaughtons appear to have been fairly and finally settled in Argyleshire previous to the reign of Alexander III., as Gilchrist Macnaughton, styled of that ilk, was by that monarch appointed, in 1287, heritable keeper of his castle and island of Frechelan (Fraoch Ellan) on Lochawe, on condition that he should be properly entertained when he should pass that way; whence a castle embattled was assumed as the crest of the family.

This Gilchrist was father or grandfather of Donald Macnaughton of that ilk, who, being nearly connected with the Macdougals of Lorn, joined that powerful chief with his clan against Robert the Bruce, and fought against the latter at the battle of Dalree in 1306, in consequence of which he lost a great part of his estates. In Abercromby's Martial Achievements,[212] it is related that the extraordinary courage shown by the king in having, in a narrow pass, slain with his own hand several of his pursuers, and amongst the rest three brothers, so greatly excited the admiration of the chief of the Macnaughtons that he became thenceforth one of his firmest adherents.[213]

His son and successor, Duncan Macnaughton of that ilk, was a steady and loyal subject to King David II., who, as a reward for his fidelity, conferred on his son, Alexander, lands in the island of Lewis, a portion of the forfeited possessions of John of the Isles, which the chiefs of the clan Naughton held for a time. The ruins of their castle of Macnaughton are still pointed out on that island.

Donald Macnaughton, a younger son of the family, was, in 1436, elected bishop of Dunkeld, in the reign of James I.

Alexander Macnaughton of that ilk, who lived in the beginning of the 16th century, was knighted by James IV., whom he accompanied to the disastrous field of Flodden, where he was slain, with nearly the whole chivalry of Scotland. His son, John, was succeeded by his second son, Malcolm Macnaughton of Glenshira, his eldest son having predeceased him. Malcolm died in the end of the reign of James VI., and was succeeded by his eldest son, Alexander.

John, the second son of Malcolm, being of a handsome appearance, attracted the notice of King James VI., who appointed him one of his pages of honour, on his accession to the English crown. He became rich, and purchased lands in Kintyre. His elder brother, Alexander Macnaughton of that ilk, adhered firmly to the cause of Charles I., and in his service sustained many severe losses. At the Restoration, as some sort of compensation, he was knighted by Charles II., and, unlike many others, received from that monarch a liberal pension for life. Sir Alexander Macnaughton

spent his later days in London, where he died. His son and successor, John Macnaughton of that ilk, succeeded to an estate greatly burdened with debt, but did not hesitate in his adherence to the fallen fortunes of the Stuarts. At the head of a considerable body of his own clan, he joined Viscount Dundee, and was with him at Killiecrankie. James VII. signed a deed in his favour, restoring to his family all its old lands and hereditary rights, but, as it never passed the seals in Scotland, it was of no value. His lands were taken from him, not by forfeiture, but "the estate," says Buchanan of Auchmar, "was evicted by creditors for sums noways equivalent to its value, and, there being no diligence used for relief thereof, it went out of the hands of the family." His son, Alexander, a captain in Queen Anne's guards, was killed in the expedition to Vigo in 1702. His brother, John, at the beginning of the last century was for many years collector of customs at Anstruther[231] in Fife, and subsequently was appointed inspector-general in the same department. The direct male line of the Macnaughton chiefs became extinct at his death.

"The Mackenricks are ascribed to the Macnaughton line, as also families of Macknights (or Macneits), Macnayers, Macbraynes, and Maceols." The present head of the Macbraynes is John Burns Macbrayne, Esq. of Glenbranter, Cowel, Argyleshire, grandson of Donald Macbrayne, merchant in Glasgow, who was great-grandson, on the female side, of Alexander Macnaughton of that ilk, and heir of line of John Macnaughton, inspector-general of customs in Scotland. On this account the present representative of the Macbraynes is entitled to quarter his arms with those of the Macnaughtons.

There are still in Athole families of the Macnaughton name, proving so far what has been stated respecting their early possession of lands in that district. Stewart of Garth makes most honourable mention of one of the sept, who was in the service of Menzies of Culdares in the year 1745. That gentleman had been "out" in 1715, and was pardoned. Grateful so far, he did not join Prince Charles, but sent a fine charger to him as he entered England. The servant, Macnaughton, who conveyed the present, was taken and tried at Carlisle. The errand on which he had come was clearly proved, and he was offered pardon and life if he would reveal the name of the sender of the horse. He asked with indignation if they supposed that he could be such a villain. They repeated the offer to him on the scaffold, but he died firm to his notion of fidelity. His life was nothing to that of his master, he said. The brother of this Macnaughton was known to Garth, and was one of the Gael who always carried a weapon about him to his dying day.[214]