

## MACQUARRIE

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

The clan Quarrie or Macquarrie is another clan held by Mr Skene to belong to the ancient stock of Alpine, their possessions being the small island of Ulva, and a portion of Mull.

The Gaelic MS. of 1450 deduces their descent from Guarie or Godfrey, called by the Highland Sennachies, Gor or Gorbred, said to have been "a brother of Fingon, ancestor of the Mackinnons, and Anrias or Andrew, ancestor of the Macgregors." This is the belief of Mr Skene, who adds, "The history of the Macquarries resembles that of the Mackinnons in many respects; like them they had migrated far from the head-quarters of their race, they became dependent on the Lords of the Isles, and followed them as if they had become a branch of the clan."

Mr Smibert, however, thinks this origin highly improbable, and is inclined to believe that they constituted one branch of the Celto-Irish immigrants. "Their mere name," he says, "connects them strongly with Ireland—the tribe of the Macquarries, Macquires, Macguires (for the names are the same), being very numerous at this day in that island, and having indeed been so at all times." We do not think he makes out a very strong case in behalf of this origin.

According to a history of the family, by one of its members, in 1249 Cormac Mohr, then "chief of Ulva's Isle," joined Alexander II., with his followers and three galleys of sixteen oars each, in his expedition against the western islands, and after that monarch's death in the Island of Kerrera, was attacked by Haco of Norway, defeated and slain. His two sons, Allan and Gregor, were compelled to take refuge in Ireland, where the latter, surnamed Garbh or the rough, is said to have founded the powerful tribe of the MacGuires, the chief of which at one time possessed the title of Lord Inniskillen. Allan returned to Scotland, and his descendant, Hector Macquarrie of Ulva, chief in the time of Robert the Bruce, fought with his clan at Bannockburn.

The first chief of whom there is any notice in the public records was John Macquarrie of Ulva, who died in 1473.[226] His son, Dunsloff, was chief when the last Lord of the Isles was forfeited twenty years afterwards. After that event, the Macquarries, like the other vassal[263] tribes of the Macdonalds, became independent. In war, however, they followed the banner of their neighbour, Maclean of Dowart. With the latter, Dunsloff supported the claims of Donald Dubh to the Lordship of the Isles, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, and in 1504, "MacGorry of Ullowaa" was summoned, with some other chiefs, before the Estates of the kingdom, to answer for his share in Donald Dubh's rebellion.

His son, John Macquarrie of Ulva, was one of the thirteen chiefs who were denounced the same year for carrying on a traitorous correspondence with the king of England, with the view of transferring their allegiance to him.

Allan Macquarrie of Ulva was slain, with most of his followers, at the battle of Inverkeithing against the English parliamentary troops, 20th July 1651, when the Scots army was defeated, and a free passage opened to Cromwell to the whole north of Scotland.

According to tradition one of the chiefs of Ulva preserved his life and estate by the exercise of a timely hospitality under the following circumstances:—Maclean of Dowart had a natural son by a beautiful young woman of his own clan, and the boy having been born in a barn was named, from his birth-place, Allan-a-Sop, or Allan of the straw. The girl afterwards became the wife of Maclean of Torloisk, residing in Mull, but though he loved the mother he cared nothing for her boy, and when the latter came to see her, he was very unkind to him. One morning the lady saw from her window her son approaching and hastened to put a cake on the fire for his breakfast. Her husband noticed this, and snatching the cake hot from the girdle, thrust it into his stepson's hands, forcibly clasping them on the burning bread. The lad's hands were severely burnt, and in consequence he refrained from going again to Torloisk. As he grew up Allan became a mariner, and joined the Danish pirates who infested the western isles. From his courage he soon got the command of one galley, and subsequently of a flotilla, and made his name both feared and famous. Of him it

may be said that—

"Sir Ralph the Rover sailed away, He scoured the seas for many a day, And now, grown rich with plunder'd store, He steers his way for Scotland's shore."

The thought of his mother brought him back once more to the island of Mull, and one morning he anchored his galleys in front of the house of Torloisk. His mother had been long dead, but his stepfather hastened to the shore, and welcomed him with apparent kindness. The crafty old man had a feud with Macquarrie of Ulva, and thought this a favourable opportunity to execute his vengeance on that chief. With this object he suggested to Allan that it was time he should settle on land, and said that he could easily get possession of the island of Ulva, by only putting to death the laird, who was old and useless. Allan agreed to the proposal, and, setting sail next morning, appeared before Macquarrie's house. The chief of Ulva was greatly alarmed when he saw the pirate galleys, but he resolved to receive their commander hospitably, in the hope that good treatment would induce him to go away, without plundering his house or doing him any injury. He caused a splendid feast to be prepared, and welcomed Allan to Ulva with every appearance of sincerity. After feasting together the whole day, in the evening the pirate-chief, when about to retire to his ships, thanked the chief for his entertainment, remarking, at the same time, that it had cost him dear. "How so?" said Macquarrie, "when I bestowed this entertainment upon you in free good will." "It is true," said Allan, who, notwithstanding his being a pirate, seems to have been of a frank and generous disposition, "but it has disarranged all my plans, and quite altered the purpose for which I came hither, which was to put you to death, seize your castle and lands, and settle myself here in your stead." Macquarrie replied that he was sure such a suggestion was not his own, but must have originated with his stepfather, old Torloisk, who was his personal enemy. He then reminded him that he had made but an indifferent husband to his mother, and was a cruel stepfather to himself, adding, "Consider this matter better, Allan, and you will see that the estate and harbour of Torloisk lie as conveniently for you as those of Ulva, and if you must make a settlement by force, it is much better you[264] should do so at the expense of the old churl, who never showed you kindness, than of a friend like me who always loved and honoured you."

Allan-a-Sop, remembering his scorched fingers, straightway sailed back to Torloisk, and meeting his stepfather, who came eagerly expecting to hear of Macquarrie's death, thus accosted him: "You hoary old villain, you instigated me to murder a better man than yourself. Have you forgotten how you scorched my fingers twenty years ago with a burning cake? The day has come when that breakfast must be paid for." So saying, with one stroke of his battle-axe he cut down his stepfather, took possession of his castle and property, and established there that branch of the clan Maclean afterwards represented by Mr Clephane Maclean.

Hector, brother of Allan Macquarrie of Ulva, and second son of Donald the twelfth chief of the Macquarries, by his wife, a daughter of Lauchlan Oig Maclean, founder of the Macleans of Torloisk, obtained from his father the lands of Ormaig in Ulva, and was the first of the Macquarries of Ormaig. This family frequently intermarried with the Macleans, both of Lochbuy and Dowart. Lauchlan, Donald's third son, was ancestor of the Macquarries of Laggan, and John, the fourth son, of those of Ballighartan.

Lauchlan Macquarrie of Ulva, the sixteenth chief in regular succession, was compelled to dispose of his lands for behoof of his creditors, and in 1778, at the age of 63, he entered the army. He served in the American war, and died in 1818, at the age of 103, without male issue. He was the last chief of the Macquarries, and was the proprietor of Ulva when Dr Samuel Johnson and Mr Boswell visited that island in 1773.

A large portion of the ancient patrimonial property was repurchased by General Macquarrie, long governor of New South Wales, and from whom Macquarrie county, Macquarrie river, and Port Macquarrie in that colony, Macquarrie's harbour, and Macquarrie's island in the South Pacific, derive their name. He was the eldest cadet of his family, and was twice married, first, to Miss Baillie of Jerviswood, and secondly, to a daughter of Sir John Campbell of Airds, by whom he had an only son, Lauchlan, who died without issue.