

The Clans of Macneil

<http://www.clanmacneilusa.us/>

Brief History of the Clan Macneil

Clan MacNeil claim descent from Niall, a descendant of Aodh O'Neil, twentieth in descent from Niall of the Nine Hostages the famous founder of the U'Neill dynasty of High Kings of Ireland. Niall established himself on Barra in 1049 and is considered the first chief of the Clan MacNeil.

The fifth chief, Neil MacNeil, was described as a Prince at a Council of the Isles in 1252 and aided in defeating the Norse at the battle of Largs in 1263. His son, the sixth chief, Neil Og MacNeil fought with Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn and was rewarded with lands in Kintyre.

Another branch of the MacNeils established themselves on the island of Gigha under Torquil MacNeil in 1427. After 1493 the two branches of MacNeils took opposite sides in the long running feud between the MacDonalds of Islay and the MacLeans of Duart, Barra MacNeils sided with the MacLeans while the Gigha MacNeils fought on the side of the Clan Donald.

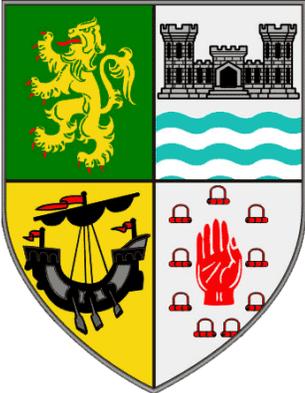
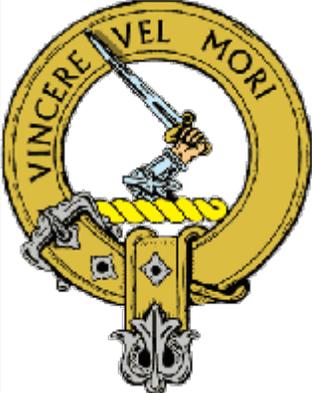
The MacNeils were famous for their sailors and quite often for their lawlessness on the high seas. The fifteenth chief of Barra, Ruari MacNeil, was known as a "hereditary outlaw" and was dubbed "Ruari the turbulent". He has also been described as the last of the Vikings, raiding ships of all sorts from his island fortress of Kisimul Castle. Ruari eventually had a writ issued against him by the King, was captured by his own nephews and taken in chains to Edinburgh in 1610. His son, Neil Og then became chief.

Neil Og's grandson, Roderick Dhu (the Black), led his fellow clansman at Killiecrankie fighting staunchly for the Jacobite cause. He rallied the Clan MacNeil once more to the aid of the "Old Pretender" in the Rising of 1715.

The 21st chief, General Roderick MacNeil was in economic ruin and had to sell the Island of Barra in 1838. Roderick had no children of his own and the chiefship then passed to a cousin whose line had emigrated to the New World.

In 1937 Kisimul castle and most of the Island of Barra were brought back into the family when Robert L. MacNeill, a descendant of the 22nd chief, returned from the United States, purchased most of Barra and spent his life restoring Kisimul Castle. His son, the 46th chief, is a law Professor and divides his time between Scotland and the United States.

Macneil Coat of Arms and Clan Badges

<i>Clan</i>	<i>Coat of Arms</i>	<i>Clan Badge</i>
Macneil of Barra	 The coat of arms is a shield divided into four quarters. The top-left quarter is green with a yellow rampant lion. The top-right quarter is white with a grey castle. The bottom-left quarter is yellow with a black anchor. The bottom-right quarter is white with a red hand holding a red sword, surrounded by red padlocks.	 The clan badge features a yellow circular border with the Gaelic motto "BUAIDH NO BAS" (Victory or Death) in black. Inside the circle is a grey castle on a red base. Below the circle is a silver sword hilt with a yellow tassel.
Macneil of Colonsay		 The clan badge features a yellow circular border with the Latin motto "VINCERE VEL MORI" (To Conquer or to Die) in black. Inside the circle is a silver sword hilt with a yellow tassel.

THE BARRA FLAG



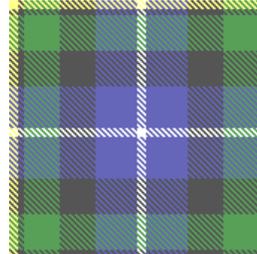
We are delighted to confirm that the Barra flag has been granted official recognition from the Lyon Court. The Barra flag resembles a Nordic cross (Scandinavian-style), symbolic of 500 years of Viking rule. The green and white colors reflect the island's Catholic heritage.

The name of the island of Barra comes from Finnbarr, otherwise known as St. Barr, who is the patron saint of the island. Barra and its islands are now predominantly Catholic in their religious belief. The Catholicism of Barra is closer to the earlier Celtic church than to any of the later branches of Christianity. The patron saints of these isles, like St. Barr, have more in common with the myths and legends of the Gaelic people than they do with the establishment of Rome.

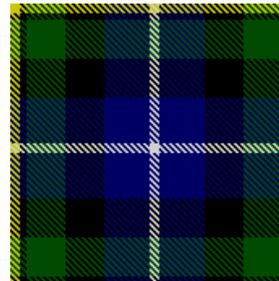
St. Barr, a county Cork man, is said to have sailed from Ireland to form the first church on the island. After he left, and despite being approached by other churches, the people remained faithful to St. Barr's teaching.

Tartans of Clan Macneil

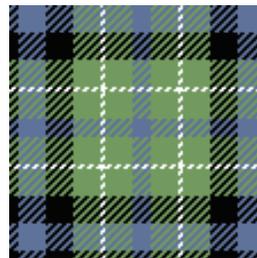
Macneil of Barra Ancient



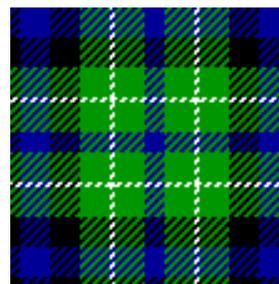
Macneil of Barra Modern (Bright)



Macneil of Colonsay Ancient



Macneil of Colonsay Modern (Bright)





Clan Macneil

The Clan Macneil Association of America

Various Forms of Spellings and Sept Names:

Macneal	Macneill	McKneill	Neal
MacNeal	MacNeill	McNeal	Neale
Macnealage	Macneillage	Mcneale	Nealey
MacNealage	MacNeille	McNeale	Neall
Macneale	MacNelly	McNealedge	Nealle
MacNeale	Macnial	McNeall	Nealy
Macneall	MacNial	McNealle	Neel
MacNeall	MacNialage	Mcneel	Neele
Macneallage	Macniall	McNeel	Neeley
MacNeallage	MacNiall	Mcneelage	Neell
Macnealle	MacNiallage	Mcneeley	Neely
MacNealle	Macniel	Mcneely	Neil
MacNeally	MacNiel	McNeely	Neill
Macneel	Macnielage	McNeil	Neille
MacNeel	MacNielage	McNeiledge	Neilsen
Macneelage	Macniell	McNeill	Neilson
MacNeelage	Macniell	McNeille	Nelson
Macneele	MacNiell	McNeilly	Niel
MacNeele	MacNiellage	Mcneily	Niell
MacNeeley	MacNielle	McNelly	Nielle
MacNeely	McCrillis	Mcnial	Nilson
Macneil	McGougan	McNial	O'Neail
MacNeil	Mcgrail	McNiall	O'Neal
Macneilage	McGrail	McNiel	O'Neil
MacNeilage	McGugan	McNeill	O'Neill
Macneile	Mcguigan	McNeille	
MacNeile	McGuigan		

FLAGS of SCOTLAND

The Scottish Flag



The Scottish flag is the cross of St. Andrew, also known as the Saltire. It is said to be one of the oldest national flags of any country, dating back at least to the 12th century.

Tradition suggests that St. Andrew (an apostle of Jesus in the Christian religion) was put to death by the Romans in Greece by being pinned to a cross of this shape.

The flag of the United Kingdom - known as the Union Flag or Union Jack - is made up from the flags of Scotland, England (the Cross of Saint George) and Ireland (the Cross of Saint Patrick).

Royal Flag of Scotland



There is a second flag which is associated with Scotland, the "Lion Rampant", or Royal Flag of Scotland. Although based on an older Scottish flag than the St. Andrew's Cross, it should, strictly speaking, now only be used by the monarch in relation to her capacity as Queen in Scotland. However, it is widely used as a second national flag.

The Lion Rampant flag flies over the offices of the Secretary of State for Scotland (who is the representative of the U.K. government in Scotland); that is Dover House in London and New St Andrew's House in Edinburgh.

King George V signed a Royal Warrant in 1934 allowing the use of the Lion Rampant flag as "a mark of loyalty" because of the forthcoming Jubilee celebrations. The Lord Lyon officially now takes the view that this permission "related to decorative ebullition", that is, it is permissible to wave the flag at football matches. It is however not allowable to fly the flag without permission, on a flag-pole or from a building. The Lord Lyon once threatened the town councilors of Cumbernauld with an Act passed in 1679 which prescribed the death penalty for misuse-use of the royal arms.

DEFINITION - CLANS

A clan is a social group made up of a number of distinct branch-families that actually descended from, or accepted themselves as descendants of, a common ancestor. The word *clan* means simply *children*. The idea of the clan as a community is necessarily based around this idea of heredity and is most often ruled according to a patriarchal structure. For instance, the clan chief represented the hereditary "*parent*" of the entire clan. The most prominent example of this form of society is the Scottish Clan system.

MAC, MC PREFIX

Scottish and Irish patronymic surnames frequently have the prefix *Mac* or *Mc*. When these surnames were originally developed, they were formed by adding the Gaelic word *mac*, which means *son of*, to the name of the original bearer's father. For example, the surname *MacDougall* literally means *son of Dougal*. In later times, these prefixes were also added to the occupation or nickname of the bearer's father. For example, *MacWard* means *son of the bard* and *MacDowell* means *son of the black stranger*.

PICTS

The Picts were a mysterious warrior people of ancient Britain. According to tradition, the Picts migrated from the shores of Brittany around the 15th century BC. They sailed northward to Ireland, but were refused permission to settle there by the ancient kings of that land. However, the Picts were granted permission to settle in the northeastern part of Scotland on the condition that each Pictish king marry an Irish princess, thus providing the Irish with a colony whose rulers were of royal Irish blood. This Pictish settlement was ruled by a matriarchal hierarchy unlike any other form of government in British history.

REGIONS

In the Middle Ages, the most common geographical divisions in Scotland were rendered by *counties*. In the modern era, however, Scotland is divided into *regions*, and subdivided into counties. The following are a list of the modern regions of Scotland, and the ancient counties which are located within them.

BOERMICIANS

The Boernicians, who were a mixture of Scottish Picts, Angles, and Vikings, were one of the ancient clans of the Scottish-English borderlands. Considered to be the ancient founding peoples of the north, the Boernicians inhabited the tract of rugged territory that stretches from Carlisle in the west to Berwick in the east. In the 4th century, Scotland was composed of five different kingdoms, which were each home to a different race: the Gaels, Vikings, Picts, Britons, and Angles all held land, each had their own realm

THE VIKINGS

The Vikings, a Scandinavian people of astounding vitality, first began their invasion of Scotland in 794. However, the first wave of mass Viking migration occurred around 888, when King Harold of Norway defeated an unruly faction of northern clans who then abandoned their homeland. In search of a new place to live, they migrated to the sea-swept Orkney Islands in the north of Scotland under the leadership of their chief, Earl Sigurd. This settlement was permitted by the Scottish king and the kings of the Isle of Man, who allowed the Viking exiles to make their homes in the Orkney and Shetland Islands in return for a payment of 20,000 shillings.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

Many people wonder which spelling of this Scottish name is the older. The quick answer is Stewart. The line of Stewart monarchs of Scotland began in 1371, descending from the union of Marjorie, daughter of King Robert the Bruce and Walter, the 6th High Steward of Scotland. Mary, Queen of Scots was born in 1542, a few days later her father died and she became infant Queen of Scotland.

A BRIEF HISTORY

The long history of the lands of the northern third of Great Britain has been violent and often tragic. The castles and ruins, the songs and the legends tell Scotland's tale. It is the harshness of its history and the ruggedness of its land that have shaped its proud inhabitants. How the country came to be, and evolved, has long taxed the minds of many historians.