

Clan CAMERON



ARMS	Gules, three bars Or
CREST	A sheaf of five arrows points upwards Proper tied with a band Gules
MOTTO	Aonaibh ri cheile (Unite)
ON COMPARTMENT	Pro rege et patria (For my king and country)
SUPPORTERS	Two savages wreathed about the head and middle with oak branches, each holding in his exterior hand a Lochaber Axe all Proper
STANDARD	Azure, a St Andrew's cross Argent in the hoist and of two tracts Gules and Or seme of oak leaves Vert, upon which is depicted a sheaf of five arrows points upwards Proper tied with a band Gules along with the word 'Lochiel' extended in the fly in letters Azure

There are several theories concerning the origin of this name: one states that they are descended from a younger son of Camchron, a king of Denmark, but the more likely explanation is that the first authentic chief of the clan, Donald Dubh, was descended either from the Macgillionies or from the mediaeval family of Cameron of Ballegarno in fife. Donald Dubh married an heiress of the Macmartains of Letterfinlay, and by his prowess and leadership, united the confederation tribes which became known as the Clan Cameron. He is believed to have been born around 1400, and he and his successors were known as captains of Clan Cameron until the time of Ewan Macallan, in the early sixteenth century, when the lands of Lochiel were united by charter into the Barony of Lochiel. Ewan's father, Alan MacDonald Dubh, the twelfth chief, was reckoned to be one of the bravest captains of his time. It was during his lifetime that the feud began with the Mackintosh clan, which was to continue sporadically for about three hundred years.

Ewan Macallan was one of the great Cameron chiefs, well favored at court and very successful in all he undertook. The untimely death of his eldest son, Donald, was a great blow to him and, resolved to give up the world; he went on pilgrimage to Rome. The pope ordained that he should build six chapels to expiate his sins – the church at Cilachoireil, Roy Bridge, is on the site of one of these chapels. He later supported the heir to the Lordship of the Isles in an unsuccessful revolt, was apprehended by Huntly, and executed at Elgin. A renowned clansman known as Tailleair Duby na Tuaige (Black Tailor of the Axe), who was a fearless warrior, was a natural leader of the clan during the sixteenth chief's minority. He later left Lochaber and settled near Dunoon, where there are many descendants of his, bearing the name of Taylor, who are loyal adherents to the clan Cameron. The next great chief was Sir Ewen, who was born in 1629 and died in 1719. As a young man, his education was overseen by the Marquis of Argyll, but his allegiances were altered after a trip to Edinburgh, where he witnessed the execution of Montrose and heard of his exploits. He became an implacable enemy of the Parliamentary forces and fought many battles to preserve the independence of his clan. In 1682 he was knighted by the Duke of York in Edinburgh, and he took part with Dundee in the Battle of Killiecrankie in 1689 in support of James VII. As a soldier, he was fearless and as a chief, he was loved, trusted and admired by his clansmen. His grandson, known as the 'gentle Lochiel', was an enlightened chief who tried to improve the lot of his clansmen. When Bonnie Prince Charlie landed in Scotland in August 1745, the chief, as a staunch Jacobite, felt duty bound to meet him, and was eventually won over by the prince to support his cause with all his clan. The history of the Forty-five is well known, but if Lochiel had not come out with his clan, the rising might never have taken place, and the chief always felt guilty that he had allowed his better judgment to be thwarted by the prince's natural charm. He died in France in 1748, mourned by friend and foe alike.

The savage repercussions which followed the disaster at Culloden altered the Highlands beyond recognition. The Cameron clan lands were forfeited, their houses burned, and their cattle removed or shot. The chief's wooden house, situated near the present House of Achnacarry, was destroyed. Today, only its stone gable remains, together with a summer house by the River Arkaig. In 1784 the estate was returned to Donald, grandson of the gentle Lochiel, subject to a large fine. He decided to build a new house at Achnacarry which he started in about 1802, with the help

of James Gillespie, the prominent Scottish architect. The project was later abandoned but his son, Donald, the twenty-third chief, completed the building which today stands by the banks of the River Arkaig, unaltered except for a wing added by his grandson.

The Cameron Highlanders, who have always had a very close association with the clan, were raised by an outstanding soldier leader, Alan Cameron of Erracht, in 1793. Donald, twenty-fourth chief who died in 1905, was a Member of Parliament for Inverness-shire for seventeen years and a member of the Royal Commission inquiring into the grievances of the crofters in 1883. His son, Donald Walter, twenty-fifth chief, was a soldier, and at the outbreak of the First World War he raised four new battalions of Cameron Highlanders. In 1934 Lochiel was created a Knight of the Thistle and subsequently appointed Lord Lieutenant of Inverness-shire. The present chief, who succeeded his father in 1951, was also created Lord Lieutenant in 1971 and a Knight of the Thistle in 1973.

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