

Clan CARMICHAEL



ARMS	Argent, a fess wreathy Azure and Gules
CREST	A dexter hand and arm in pale armed and holding a broken spear Proper
MOTTO	Tout jour prest (Always ready)
SUPPORTERS	Dexter, a knight armed at all points and plumed with three ostrich feathers holding in his dexter hand a Marischal's baton all Prober; sinister, a horse of war Argent furnished Gules
STANDARD	Azure, a St Andrew's Cross argent in the hoist and of two tracts Argent and Azure, upon which is depicted the Crest in the first and third compartments and the Badge in the centre compartment along with the Motto 'Tout jour prest' in letters Argent upon two transverse bands gules
BADGE	A horse of war Argent furnished Gules within a circular wreath Azure and Gules

The Carmichaels have been settled on the lands in the upper ward of Lanarkshire from which they derive their name, for almost eight hundred years. The lands of Carmichael were originally part of the broad Douglasdale territory granted to the Douglas's by Robert the Bruce in 1321. Robert de Carmitely resigned claims to the patronage of the church of Cleghorn around 1220. Robert de Carmichael is mentioned in a charter of Dryburgh Abbey in the year 1226. Later, other Carmichaels are mentioned in charters of the Douglas family until, between 1374-84 Sir John de Carmichael from William, Earl of Douglas. This Sir John was one of the knights who supported the Douglas faction in their struggle for power in Scotland and in their forays across the English border. The granting of this large piece of Douglas territory was undoubtedly a reward for the martial prowess of Sir John and the Carmichael men. The barony of Carmichael was confirmed to the head of the family in 1414 and it extended at its greatest extent to over fourteen thousand acres in the parishes of Carmichael, Pettinain and Carluke.

The traditional hero of the Carmichael family is Sir John de Carmichael of Meadowflat, later of Carmichael, who fought in France with the Scottish army sent to the aid of the French in their resistance against an English invasion. On March 22 1421, at the Battle of Beauge, Sir John rode in combat against the English commander and unhorsed him, breaking his own spear in the action. His victim was the duke of Clarence, a Knight of the Garter and brother of Henry V of England. Carmichael's victory so demoralized the English that they fled from the field. To commemorate this deed, Carmichaels bear the broken spear as their crest.

Catherine, daughter of Sir John Carmichael of Meadowflat, captain of Crawford Castle, became the mistress of James V, bearing him a son who was half-brother to Mary, Queen of Scots. The king built the castle of Crawfordjohn in Clydesdale for her and as a place for them to meet undisturbed. In 1546 Peter Carmichael of Balmedie took part in the slaying of Cardinal Beaton in his Castle of St Andrews. He is said to have struck the cardinal repeatedly, presumably with a dagger. He was one of a group of four conspirators and for his crime he was sentenced to the galleys, serving at the oars with the reformer, John Knox. He was later imprisoned but escaped, disguised as a friar mendicant.

Sir John Carmichael, known as 'the most expert Borderer' was chief from 1585 until he was murdered in 1599. John was a favorite of James VI and was knighted at the coronation of James's queen, Anne, and was subsequently sent on a diplomatic mission to England. He was captain of the King's Guard, Master of the Stables, warden of the west marches and a Privy Councilor. He was later ambushed and shot after arresting some Armstrong's during a disturbance in the lands between Annan and Langholm. Sir John's brother, Archigald Carmichael of Edom, later prosecuted the murderer and obtained justice.

Sir James Carmichael, first Lord Carmichael was created a Baronet of Nova Scotia in 1627 and raised to the peerage in 1647. His son, William, married Grizel, daughter of the Marquess of Douglas, and their son, John, succeeded his grandfather as second Lord Carmichael. In 1701 he was created Earl of Hyndford, Viscount

Inglisberry and Nemphlar, and Lord Carmichael of Carmichael. The five succeeding Earls of Hyndford all held high offices of state and often served in the army. However, their loyalties shifted with the times. The first Lord Carmichael was a staunch supporter of Charles I but his son, although knighted by the king in 1633, took the side of Parliament, along with his brother, Sir Daniel. He commanded the Clydesdale Regiment at Marston Moor in 1644 and at Philiphaugh the following year, where the royalist forces under the Marquess of Montrose were defeated. The remaining brothers, Sir James Carmichael of Bonnytoun and Captain John Carmichael were royalists. The former fought at the Battle of Dunbar in 1650, and the latter was killed at Marston Moor, where he must have taken the field against his own elder brothers.

The third Earl, known in the family as 'the great Earl', was a staunch supporter of the Hanoverians, and was an ambassador in the service of George II. He was also noted as an Agricultural improver, laying out large sums to plant trees and gardens and to improve the soil. The sixth Earl died unmarried in 1817, when the family titles and honors became dormant and the great estates of Carmichael passed to Sir John Anstruther of Anstruther, Baronet, who descended through a daughter of the second Earl of Hyndford. For one hundred and sixty-three years the Carmichael-Anstruthers were the proprietors of Carmichael, and made it their seat until the death in 1980 of Sir Windham Carmichael-Anstruther, eleventh Baronet. The present chief, Richard Carmichael of Carmichael, has worked tirelessly to support the Clan Carmichael Society which now has branches throughout the world.

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