



Clan Lamont Society of North America

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

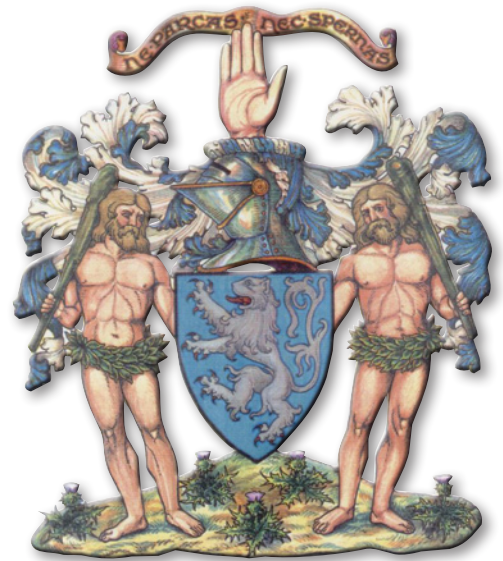
Thank you for taking in interest in the Clan Lamont Society of North America. This document that you hold in your hand is the first step in understanding what our Society is about and why it matters. Our goal in these few pages is to give you a glimpse into the culture of your unique and special ancestry. We hope that in the course of reading this document you will connect with the past and begin the remarkable journey of self discovery many of us have already traveled. We are a community bound together by a common ancestry and a interest in it's preservation. A bond that has forged lifelong friendships among many of our members.

What is a Clan?

The Clan system was the effective means of government in the Highlands of Scotland from sometime before the year 1000 AD until it was essentially eliminated by the English in 1745. It grew out of the similar system of Celtic Ireland, from whence the Scots came.

What is a Clan? A anthropologist has defined a clan as a group whose membership shares a descent from a common ancestor. A Clan might, be defined as a group of cousins. Sir Iain Moncreiffe has said in describing the Scottish clans, much more appealingly : "A Maclean or a Campbell, a Cameron or a Mackintosh were distinguished by features which cut clean across class. Although people often speak of 'old Families', in fact no family is older than any other. What is meant is that the particular families called 'old' have managed to maintain their identity and retain records of their past longer than the majority of other folk. In England and abroad, this is too often true only of a limited aristocracy. In the Highlands, however, everybody was eventually descended one way or another from several of the great historic royal clans."

Sir Iain's description should be particularly satisfying to all Highlanders because of what he describes as "the sacred royal and dynastic origin of the founder chiefs, and thus of the clans themselves: the ultimate biological unity with the Sovereign that accounts for 'Highland pride' and 'loyalty'" In the end-papers of this book, Sir Iain sets out two conjectural family trees: The Galley, showing clan descent from the Norse King Ingiald, 7th century ruler of Uppsala, and The Lyon, showing clan descent from the Irish Eochu, King of Tara, father of Niall of the Nine Hostages. The Lamonts are members of the Lyon group. But now that the clans have dispersed to near and far corners of the world, what is left beyond a vague remembrance of Scots descent? What remains is the clan: a sense of family, of common roots, of a place from whence we all came, strengthened by the romance of history, the skirling of pipes, the swing of the kilt, the remembrance of a dour and hard, but beautiful land, and above all, Highland pride and loyalty.



The Arms of Clan Lamont

The Lamont Tartan

Tartan cloth is of undoubted great antiquity, but, contrary to popular belief, there is little or no evidence of "Clan Tartans" before 1747 and the banning of the wearing of tartan. There are paintings of clan chiefs made in the 17th and 18th centuries, which show them wearing more than one tartan at a time, none of which match current clan tartans. Apparently, the main means of indicating clan affiliation, was the sprig of plant badge worn on the bonnet. After the repeal of the ban in 1782, there was more interest in tartan, but it was not until Sir Walter Scott's romantic Waverley Novels, that interest surged about the highlands and their tartans. It was

in 1819 that Wilson's of Bannockburn, the leading tartan weaving firm, issued a pattern book. The tartans were all numbered, but some did have names of clans, families, and cities. Most of these tartans are now forgotten, but some are still in use under different clan names! If Scott's novels had created an interest in the Highlands, his orchestrating of the 1822 visit of King William IV to Edinburgh, created a panic of kilt buying. The woolen mills turned out "clan" tartans as fast as they could. Most clan tartans date from this period. However, it was in 1817, before the issuing of the Wilson's pattern book, that our Chief, John Lamont, registered the Lamont tartan.



Ancient

Modern

Weathered



Crabapple Badge



*Archibald Campbell
1st Marquess of Argyll*

In the 17th century wars of Montrose, Sir John, 14th chief, who had been knighted by King Charles, after much shilly-shallying, joined Argyll's Covenanting army and in the inglorious rout of that force at Inverlochy he and his brother were taken prisoner. He then threw in his lot with Montrose the Royalist general. Archibald, the chief's brother, with Colkitto's fighting Irish, crossed Loch Long in boats provided by the Lamonts and landed at the Point of Strone.

After defeating a Campbell force in the heights above the point the Royalist army mustered at Toward and then harried far and wide in the Campbell lands. The Lamonts had their share in this killing and plundering particularly in North Cowal, and they attacked the old tower of Kilmun and the bishop's house in Dunoon. Dunoon is a place of grim memory for the Lamonts. There the Campbells carried out one of the massacres which stain their clan's history. In 1646 the Campbells made a concentrated attack on the Lamont castles of Toward and Ascog, and, when the garrisons surrendered under written guarantee of liberty, the Campbells ignored the terms of capitulation. The survivors of the defenders were carried in boats to Dunoon and in the church were sentenced to death. About 100 were shot or stabbed to death and another 36 of 'the special gentlemen' of the Lamonts were hanged from a tree in the churchyard and dead and dying were buried in pits. The Chief and his close kin were hustled away to Inveraray, where some were hanged. The Chief and his brothers being kept prisoner for five years. It was 16 years before the ringleaders of the

massacre were brought to justice, and Sir Colin Campbell was beheaded. The Clan Lamont Society in 1909 raised a monument on the spot where so many met their deaths.

After 1646, the much reduced Clan Lamont had a fairly peaceful history, finally having the good sense or luck to not get involved with any more losing causes. We stayed out of both the 1715 and 1745 Jacobite uprisings. This may have been due to the fact that they were now pretty well surrounded by Campbells, who always sided with the English government (To their great profit).

With the destruction of the Clan system in 1745, the structure of Highland society was changed for all time. When the power of the Chiefs was eliminated, so was their need for dedicated clansmen to protect and expand the clan lands. The result of this, in time, was the infamous Highland clearances; where chiefs cleared the land of crofters, and substituted the more profitable sheep. As was the case with the Lamonts, some chiefs tended to sell off the clan lands instead of shifting to sheep. Sadly, as a result of this policy, there are now none of the ancestral lands in Lamont hands. Starting very early, even before 1600, Lamonts have tended to disperse, and are now one of the most widespread of clans.



Highland Clearances



Toward Castle Artist's Depiction

Toward Castle

Toward Castle is located at the southeastern tip of the Cowal peninsula, and was built sometime in the mid 1400's. It served as the seat of the Lamont Chiefs until 1646, when it was destroyed by the Campbells. After its destruction, the Chiefs moved to Ardlamont at the southwestern tip of Cowal. It is impossible to tell exactly what the castle looked like in its prime, as no paintings exist. However, this much is known. The tower had two vaulted cellars of unequal size at ground level and a vaulted hall on the first floor. Entrance was at first-floor level in the south-west wall, with a mural stair in the east corner serving the cellars. The larger of these had a garderobe in the south-west

wall, and in the south-east a small mural chamber which may represent a former ground-level entrance. There were two floors above the hall, of which little more than the north-west wall survives. The north-west side of the courtyard wall was a continuation of the shorter wall of the tower-house. The south-eastern wall extended outwards with a building of roughly twice the tower's area; this contained three rooms at ground level. The Hall had a door to the outside. The northern end of the courtyard wall had a sixteenth-century gateway, whose arch is still intact (though the gatehouse above has gone), and is a very fine example of early renaissance carving: rope moulding, chequers, plain roll and corbels. The gateway projects to allow for shot-loops giving flanking fire along the wall. Within the gate was a vaulted passage with guardrooms either side. The ruins do not give the impression of a very large structure, but it was probably of average size for the time in which it was built. It was no humble pile of stones, as evidenced by the fact that Mary Queen of Scots, was entertained there in 1563.



Toward Castle Ruins Today

Kilfinan Parish Church

Kilfinan Parish Church figures prominently in the history of Clan Lamont. The earliest surviving written record of the clan, and one of the earliest of any clan; is a charter signed in 1235 by Sir Laumon, first Chief of Clan Lamont, and his uncle Duncan, giving the church to the monks of Paisley. Many of the early chiefs, including Sir Laumon's son Malcolm, are buried here. It is still an active parish church located on the western side of Cowal, near the shore of Loch Fyne, almost due west of Dunoon. It is currently (1995) undergoing a restoration project. Most of the funds for this project, have been donated by Lamonts around the world.



Kilfinan Church Today

Knockdow House

Seat of the McCorrie Lamonts of Knockdow, the house is located on a 6,000 acre estate, southeast of Dunoon, about 11 miles by route A 815. Located on a large wooded estate, it was built in 1817, and enlarged and remodeled by the last Lamont of Knockdow, Sir Norman Lamont, in recent times. The estate was sold in 1990. Fortunately, most of the contents pertaining to Clan Lamont, were bequeathed to the Clan Lamont Society by Sir Norman's heirs.



Knockdow House Today



The Lamont Harp

An Clarsach Laomannach *The Lamont Harp*

The Lamont Harp, now in an Edinburgh museum, is the oldest surviving Celtic harp. The harp was the traditional musical instrument of the Celts, long before the adoption of the bagpipe in the 16th century.

The harp was the instrument of the bards, those individuals whose gift of oral recitation made them invaluable to the early clan chiefs. The Lamont harp dates from at the latest, the mid 1400s. It was in the possession of Lillias, a daughter of Duncan Lamont, our 8th Chief, when in 1464 she married Charles Robertson of Lude. The harp stayed at Lude, near Blair Atholl, until 1914, when it was purchased by the National Museum of Antiquities for 850 guineas. It is now one of the prized historical objects of Scotland. Here is the description of the harp by David Kortier, a well known harp maker, who has examined the Lamont Harp:



*The Lamont Harp in her Current Home
Museum of Antiquities, Edinburgh*

"The Lamont is entirely of one species of wood, a hardwood, which is unusual. It is clear to me that the wood is English walnut, not hornbeam, however. I immediately thought "walnut" when I had the harp in front of me, but the color did not seem right. (I am most familiar with American black walnut.) Later in the day, I visited the Russell Collection of Keyboards Instruments at the University of Edinburgh. There in front of me was acres of this same wood. The lid of one early harpsichord in particular (English, about 1720) looked as though it could have been from the same log as the Lamont. The Curator there informed me that the wood in question is walnut, meaning, of course, English walnut.

The other curious thing about the Lamont harp is an inscription, apparently previously not noted, on the harp. Robert Bruce Armstrong, in his exhaustive description of this harp around 1900, does not mention it, because the harp was covered with a heavy red paint then. It is scratched unceremoniously into the side of the soundbox, and says, Al. Stewart of Clunie his harp 1650. Here is a project for a research musicologist/historian!"

The Modern Clan Lamont

Is Our Clan Relevant?

Now that the clans have dispersed to near and far corners of the world, what is left beyond a vague remembrance of Scots descent? What remains is the clan: a sense of family, of common roots, of a place from whence we all came, strengthened by the romance of history, the skirling of pipes, the swing of the kilt, the remembrance of a dour and hard, but beautiful land, and above all Highland pride and loyalty.

Many, of course do not feel these things and; are content to melt into a restless and mobile technological society with no sense of place and little of past or family. And who is to criticize, or to deny that that may be the future of mankind? Others, however, feel the need for personal historic, physical and genealogical roots; for the title clan is something special and meaning. For those who feel this way, no explanation of what a clan is required; for those that do not, no amount of explanation will really do.

Our Present Clan Chief

The current Chief of Clan Lamont is the 29th, Father Peter Noel Lamont of that Ilk. Father Lamont is Parish Priest in St. Andrew's Parish, in Marayong, a suburb of Sydney, Australia. He was born on November 21, 1955, and became Chief upon the death of his father, Noel Brian Lamont, on July 16, 1972. His branch of the family came to Australia in 1855, led by his Great Great Grandfather, Edward Buller Lamont. The Chiefship moved to Australia in 1929, when Peter's Great Uncle, Edward Luis Lamont, became the 22nd Chief. Peter has a younger brother, Gregory, who is married, and has sons, so the Chief's line will continue in Australia. He also has a sister, Roxanne. Father Lamont was ordained at St. Patrick's Cathedral, in Parramatta on November 22, 1986.



*Father Peter Noel Lamont of that Ilk
29th Chief of Clan Lamont*

The Clan Lamont Society of North America, had the honor of inviting Father Lamont, or Peter as he prefers to be called, to be our guest at the 125th annual San Francisco Caledonian Club Highland Games in 1990. All of our members who attended at Santa Rosa, California, were greatly impressed with our Chief. He is very warm and friendly, and a great asset to our Clan.

What is a Sept?

Septs are families that followed another family's chief. These smaller septs would then make up, and be part of the chief's larger clan. In some cases, a sept would follow another chief if two families were linked through marriage. However, if a family lived on the land of a powerful laird, they would follow him whether they were related or not. The following family names have a known historical kinship with the Clan Lamont.

Aldownie, -y	Lemmon	MacGilledow	MacPhunn
Black	Lemon	MacGillegowie	MacSorley
Blackie	Lemond	MacGorie, -y	MacSurely
Blaik	Lamond	MacGorrie,	Meickleam
Blaikie	Lamont	MacIldowie,	Meickleham
Blake	Limon	MacIlwham	Meikle
Blaker	Limond	MacIlwhom	Meiklehem
Blakey	Limont	MacInturner	Meiklejohn
Broun	Lucas	MacKerchar	Meiklem
Brown	Luck	MacKerracher	Munn
Burden	Luckie, -y	MacLammie, -y	Munt
Burdon	Luke	MacLamond	Patrick
Clement	MacAlduie	MacLemmon	Pater~on
Lamb	MacAldowie	MacLemon	Phorich
Lambie	MacClammie, -y	MacLucas	Sorlie, -y
Lammie	MacClement(s)	MacLuckie, -y	Toward
Lammon	MacCluckie, -y	MacLugash	Towart
Lammond	MacClymont	MacLuke	Turner
Lamon	MacEaracher	MacLusa	White
Lamond	MacErcher	MacLymont	Whyte
Lamondson	MacErracher	MacMunn	
Lander(s)	MacFarquhar	MacPatrick	

If you're family name is listed here you are likely a descendant of Clan Lamont!

About CLSNA

The CLAN LAMONT SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA, INC. was formed on December 7th, 1982 in the state of North Carolina by Lamonts interested in promoting their Scottish heritage in the United States.

PURPOSE

a) To bring into one general organization those descendants of the Lamont families of Scotland, the several septs of the Clan Lamont, those who have the right to wear the name Lamont by virtue of their heritage and tradition, and who reside in North America.

b) To study and preserve the history of the Lamont Clan and its various septs and names and to maintain records of families and descendants thereof connected with the Lamont Clan of Scotland and elsewhere; and to encourage the preservation and production of literature having to do with the history of the Lamont families as well as the general history of Scotland; the formation of the club for the purpose of preservation of Scottish traditions and customs on the North American continent by maintaining the connections of those Americans of Scottish descent with their homeland and encouraging personal contact and commingling of Americans of Scottish descent through the formation of a Society which provides them with an opportunity to meet socially and discuss, enjoy, and preserve their history, their literature, their music, their attire, and all the other things they hold dear from the lands of their fathers.

c) To sponsor and promote educational activities in furtherance of the above-stated purposes.



The Clan Lamont Pipe Band - Waalwijk, Netherlands

How We Fulfill Our Mission

The Clan Lamont Society of North America (CLSNA) fulfills its mission in a variety of different ways. We attend a number of cultural events like highland games and heritage gatherings around the country. You may have even found us for the first time at one of these events. We talk to people like you who are just now discovering a connection to our Clan with the intention to help. We try to answer questions and get you pointed in the right direction toward a path to discovery. Also, we provide a means to preserve our heritage and honor the traditions of the past. To do this we employ a variety of methods. Our historians, genealogists and publishers work hard to investigate and bring to light existing and new discoveries. Through our newsletter "The Wee Harp" their work is revealed as we continue to discuss our history and share it with each other. Using our online discussion forum we can stay connected within our communities, our nation and around the world. Private gatherings as well as public insure we wear with pride the garments and observe the customs of our ancestors. In addition, we sponsor or contribute a variety of projects outside our organization that promote our heritage and that of greater Scotland. These include architectural restoration projects, book publication, films and so on.

Members & Friends

Membership in our Society is completely optional. By that we mean we would love to welcome you as an interested friend of the Clan even if you are not ready for membership. Membership brings with it some exclusive benefits such as our newsletter, The Wee Harp, as well as access to other members who share a common interest. The most rewarding benefit of membership is the knowledge that you are supporting the mission to preserve our unique heritage for generations to come. Please join with us!

We can't do anything without the support of our Members!

Contact Us or Visit Us Online

Visit these sites to find additional information, contacts or participate in online discussions.

CLSNA | Official Website - <http://clsna.us/>

This is the official website of The Clan Lamont Society of North America. Visit here to learn more about Clan History, Insignia and our Society.

Lamont Central | Current Events Website - <http://www.lamontcentral.com/>

This is the website for Clan Lamont happenings around the country. It also houses downloadable literature, a member directory and more.

CLSNA' Forum | Discussion Website - <http://activeboard.lamontcentral.com/>

Join in lively discussions about all things Lamont and Scottish. Open to friends and members alike.

We Look Forward to Hearing From You!

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