



# Clan HUNTER OF HUNTERSTON

<b>ARMS</b>	Or, three hunting horns Vert, garnished and stringed Gules
<b>CREST</b>	A greyhound sejant Proper, gorged with an antique crown Or
<b>MOTTO</b>	Cursum perficio ( I accomplish the hunt)
<b>SUPPORTERS</b>	Two greyhounds Proper, gorged with antique crowns Or
<b>STANDARD</b>	The arms of Hunter of Hunterston in the hoist and of two tracts Or and Vert, upon which is depicted the Crest three times along with the Motto 'Cursum perficio' in letters Or upon two transverse bands Gules
<b>PINSEL</b>	Or, bearing upon a Wreath of the Liveries the Crest within a strap of leather Proper buckled and embellished Or inscribed with this Motto 'Cursum perficio' in letters of the Field all within a circlet Gules bearing the name and title 'Hunter of Hunterston' also in letters of the Field and in the fly a stem of thrift Proper surmounted of an Escrol Gules bearing the word 'Hunterston' in letters of the Field
<b>PLANT BADGE</b>	Stem of thrift ( <i>armeria maritima</i> ) Proper

**A**t Hunterston in Ayrshire is carefully preserved on a frail parchment a charter signed by Robert II on 2 May 1374, confirming the grant of land to William Hunter 'for his faithful service rendered and to be rendered to us in return for a silver penny payable to the Sovereign at Hunterston on the Feast of Pentecost'. To this day the Laird of Hunterston keeps silver pennies, minted in the reigns of Robert II and George V, in case of a royal visit to the district on the day appointed for the payment of his rent. William Hunter, who received this charter, is reckoned the tenth Hunter of Hunterston. In even earlier records, William and Norman Hunter appear using the Latin form of the name, 'Venator' Aylmer le Hunter of the county of Ayr signed the Ragman Roll in 1296 as one of the nobles of Scotland submitting to Edward I of England.

By the fifteenth century the Hunters were hereditary keepers of the royal forests of Arran and the Little Cumbrae. It appears that they held this office from an early date, and the family claims a long descent from the holders of similar offices on England and Normandy before coming to Scotland. By tradition, an ancestor of the Hunters was with Rollo, the Viking, at the sack of Paris in 896, and was later appointed one of the huntsmen to Rollo's descendents, the Dukes of Normandy. The Hunters followed William the Conqueror's queen, Matilda, to England, and because of this their names are not included in the list of the companions of the Conqueror. The Hunter's wife was lady-in-waiting to Queen Matilda, and presumably had a hand in making the famous Bayeux Tapestry. It seems likely that the family came to Scotland early in the twelfth century at the invitation of David I, who was brought up with his sister at the Norman court in England, and were given the lands which eventually became known as Hunter's Toune.

In the sixteenth century the service to be rendered by the Hunters became chiefly military. John, the fourteenth Laird, died with his king at Flodden. His son, Robert, was 'trublit with sickness and infirmity', and in 1542 was excised from army service by James V provided he send in his place his eldest son and his tenant. His son, Mungo, succeeded his father in 1546, but was killed the following year at the Battle of Pinkie. In succeeding generations the Hunters became peaceful Lairds, tending their estates and looking after their tenants. Cadet branches of the family as was the custom, made their own way in the world as soldiers or in the professions. Robert, son of the twentieth Laird, graduated at Glasgow University in 1643. He was minister of West Kilbride, where he bought land and so founded the Hunters of Kirkland. Robert, a grandson of the twentieth Laird, served under Marlborough and became Governor of Virginia and then of New York.

The early eighteenth century brought financial problems for the family. These were resolved by Robert Hunter, a younger son of the twenty-second Laird, who succeeded to the estate and managed it with such vigor and accomplishment that it has been said that he may be viewed as a second founder of his ancient family. He was considerate of his tenants, often remarking that they had held their occupancies from as early a period as he did himself. He died at the age of 86 and was succeeded by his daughter, Eleanora. She married her cousin, Robert Caldwell, a wealthy merchant and banker. He assumed the name Hunter, and together they began extensive improvements to the estate. They built the present Hunterston House, a fine example of late eighteenth-century

architecture. Their son altered and extended the house in 1835. He had two daughters: Jane, who married Robert William Cochran-Patrick. Jane Hunter Weston died in 1911 to be succeeded by her son, Lieutenant General Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston, a distinguished soldier. He served on Kitchener's staff in the Egyptian War of 1896, then in the Boer War and later as divisional officer to Sir John French, commander of the British Expeditionary Force in France from 1914 to 1915. In the First World War he was in the Gallipoli landings, and later commanded the 8<sup>th</sup> Army on the western Front. He was awarded many decorations and honors, including the distinguished Service Order and a Knighthood of the Bath. He served as MP for North Ayrshire and Bute for twenty-seven years, and commissioned the great architect, Sir Robert Lorimer, to restore the old Castle of Hunterston. He died in 1940 without issue, and on the death of his widow in 1954 the estate passed to the descendents of his mother's younger sister. Eleanora, granddaughter of Eleanora Hunter and Robert William Cochran-Patrick, succeeded adopting the style, 'Miss Hunter of Hunterston'. In 1969 she passed the estate to her nephew, Neil, who was officially recognized by the Lork Lyon as twenty-ninth Laird and chief. Prior to his death in 1994, he had nominated by tanistry his eldest child, Pauline, to succeed him as chief; she has now been recognized in this position by the Lord Lyon.

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