



CLAN MACALISTER

ARMS

Or, an eagle displayed Gules armed Sable surmounted on the breast of a galley of the First within a border of the Third charged with three cross crosslets fitchée Argent

CREST

A dexter arm in armour erect, the hand holding a dagger in pale all Proper

MOTTO

Fortiter (Boldly)

On Compartment Per mare per terras (By sea and by land)

SUPPORTERS

(On a compartment entwined with an Escrol bearing the second Motto) Dexter, a bear pierced in the black with an arrow all Proper; sinister, an eagle Proper

This important family was one of the earliest branches to assert its independence from the great Clan Donald. Some doubt exists as to the exact progenitor of this clan, but it is now accepted they are the descendents of Alastair Mor, son of Donald of the Isles. Alastair first appears as a witness to a charter granted by his brother Angus, Lord of the Isles, to the Abbey of Paisley around 1253. The lands of Lowp, later to be the chiefly designation of Loup, are mentioned in a charter by James III confirming lands in Kintyre to the Lord of the Isles. In 1481, Charles Macalister was made constable of the Castle of Tarbet, and received a grant of lands in Kintyre. Charles was succeeded as chief by his son, John, who is the first to be styled 'of the Lowp'. The Castle of Tarbert was used by James IV as a naval supply base during his campaign to suppress the Lordship of the Isles. Clan Alastair occupied an influential position, although they were by no means a numerous clan, and therefore sought to secure their position by alliances with other houses. In 1591, Godfrey Macalister of Loup received a charter from the Earl of Argyll in relation to lands at Tabert which they held until after 1745.

The Macalisters were not immune from family quarrels, and in 1598 Godfrey Macalister killed his tutor and guardian, Charles Macalister, and thereafter besieged his sons at their house at Askomull. In 1600 the island of Arran was invaded by the Macalisters, who seized the house and estates of John Montgomery of Skelmorlie, plundering possessions valued at £12,000 Scots. Two years later, Archibald Macalister, the heir of Tarbert, led his men, along with other clans of north Kintyre, to raid the prosperous island of Bute. It is said that a force of over twelve hundred men ravaged the Stewart possessions on the island, for which act Archibald Macalister was denounced as a rebel. In 1605 Archibald and his kinsman, John Macalister, tutor of Loup, were ordered to appear before the Privy Council and fined surety on pain of being denounced as rebels. Alexander Macalister, along with Angus Og, leader of the Macdonalds of Islay were found guilty of treason and after incarceration in the prison of the Tollbooth in Edinburgh, they were hanged. However, by 1623 Macalister of Loup was one of the justices of the peace for Argyllshire.

The Macalisters came to Stirlingshire some time in the fourteenth century, and during generations that followed their Celtic name was anglicized into its more familiar lowland version, Alexander. By the sixteenth century they settled on the estates of Menstrie only a few miles northeast of the mighty royal Castle of Stirling. William Alexander of Menstrie became a courtier under the patronage of the Earl of Argyll. He was instrumental in promoting the colonization of the Scottish territories in Canada, known as Nova Scotia, and devised the scheme whereby those investing in the colony would receive the honor known as a Baronetcy of Nova Scotia. The scheme was a roaring success, although it did more to bolster the flagging royal finances than secure the development on the far-distant colony. There is a splendid room displaying the arms of the baronets of Nova Scotia still preserved at Menstrie. He was rewarded by his grateful royal master first with a viscountcy, and then the earldom of Stirling. In 1631 Archibald Macalister of Tarbert visited his kinsman, William Alexander, now Earl of Stirling, at his Castle of Menstrie, and the earl procured for his guest election as a burgess of the royal burgh of Stirling in August of that year. It was during his kinsman of Tarbert's visit that the earl obtained an acknowledgement that he was chief of the Macalister. This was, of course, entirely a product of the earl's vanity, and had no genealogical basis whatsoever.

By 1706 Tarbert had passed from the Macalisters into the possession of the Macleans. The chiefs continued to flourish on their lands of Loup and a younger son, Duncan, settled in Holland in 1717, where he rose to high rank in the army; his descendents can still be traced to this day. The chiefly family eventually sold off their estates in

Kintyre, and the present chief lives in England. Glenbarr Abbey is the modern clan center, displaying many interesting mementos of the name.

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Clan MAC ALISTER Septs

ALASTAIR	LOOP	MAC ALINSTER	MAC CLESTER
ALEXANDER	LOUB	MAC ALINSTON	MAC COLLASTER
ALISON	LOUP	MAC ALISTAIR	MAC CULLITER
ALISTAIR	LUBIE,-Y	MAC ALISTER	MAC LESTER
ALISTE	LUIB	MAC ALISTER	SANDER(S)
ALLISTER	MAC AL(L)ISTOR	MAC ALLASTER	SANDERSON
LESTER	MAC ALASTER	MAC ALLISTER	SANDE SON
LISTER	MAC ALESTER	MAC CALLISTER	SAUNDERS
LOOB	MAC ALEXANDER	MAC CLEISTER	

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