



## Clan NICOLSON

<b>ARMS</b>	Or, three falcon's heads erased Gules armed Argent
<b>CREST</b>	A lion issuant Or armed and langued Gules
<b>MOTTO</b>	Generositate (By generosity)
<b>On Compartment</b>	Nil sistere contra (Nothing to oppose us)
<b>SUPPORTERS</b>	(on a compartment embellished with juniper) Two eagles Or armed Gules
<b>STANDARD</b>	Azure, a St Andrew's Cross in the hoist and of the Livery Gules, upon which is depicted the Crest along with the Motto 'Generositate' extended in the fly in letters Or
<b>PINSEL</b>	Gules, bearing upon a Wreath of the Liveries Gules and Or a lion issuant or armed and langued Gules within a strap Gules buckled and embellished Or inscribed in letters Or with the Motto "Generositate" al within a circlet Or inscribed of a Baron's coronet, inscribed with the title 'Nicholson of that Ilk' in letters Gules, and in the fly an Escrol Or bearing in letters Gules the Slogan 'A Nicholson' surmounting a sprig of juniper
<b>PLANT BADGE</b>	Sprig of juniper

**A**lthough the Macneacails or Macnicols of the west Highlands and islands are, according to their heraldry, apparently linked to the Nicholsons of that Ilk, there is little genealogical evidence available to explain this. The chiefs of both clans bear gold shields charged with the heads of birds of prey, with red hawks for Macneacail and red falcons for Nicolson. The Nicholsons are of Norse descent, perhaps derived from the personal name Olsen, 'Nic' in Gaelic signifying 'daughter of'. It could also be a corruption of Nichoassen. The Norse raided all around the coasts of Scotland and north England, and during the centuries of conquest, they established many permanent settlements. The name Nicolson can be found all through Tyneside and Yorkshire. Some sought fresh pillage on the northern coast of France, whence came their Norman descendents, who invaded England again in the eleventh century, and settled in Scotland during the reign of David I. The Macneacails who settled in the Hebrides first populated Lewis, but eventually made their home and chief seat at Scorrybreac in Skye.

Haakon IV, the last Norse King to invade Scotland, sent an advance party under Anders Nichoassen, his foster brother and one of his chief farons. Nichlassen plundered Bute before joining the main fleet off Largs. The Norsemen were defeated, but there is a persistent tradition that Nicholassen eventually settled in Scotland after he was sent as an envoy from Norway to conclude the Treaty of Perth, which finally ceded sovereignty over the isles to the kings of Scots.

James Nicolson was a lawyer in Edinburgh who died around 1580. He married Janet Swinton of the ancient Borders family, and they had two sons, John, the heir, became an advocate, while his brother, James, entered the Church. James was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1595, and minister at Meigle. When James VI re-established Episcopal authority in the reformed Church, he appointed James Bishop of Dunkeld in 1606. He was bishop for less than a year, dying in August 1607. His son became an advocate, but his grandson returned to the cloth as minister of Tingwall in Shetland. John, the bishop's elder brother, had acquired the lands of Lasswade by a charter in 1592 from Sinclair of Dryden. His son, John, was created a Baronet of Nova Scotia as Nicolson of that Ilk and Lasseade on 27 July 1629. He was succeeded in that title by his grandson, who was Commissioner of Parliament for Edinburgh in 1672. In 1826 the direct male line failed, and a descendent of the Bishop of Dunkeld from the branch established in Shetland by the bishop's grandson, became the eighth Baronet.

Another baronetcy had been conferred on the family in 1637, when Thomas Nicholson, a son of John Nicolson of Edinburgh, became the first Baronet of Carnock near Stirling. Sir Thomas, third Baronet of Carnock, married Jean, eldest daughter of Archibald, second Lord Napier, in 1558. When the third Lord Napier died in 1683, his nephew, Sir Thomas's son, then fourteen years old, became the fourth Lord. He had been the fourth Baronet since his

father's death in 1670. He died only three years later, under-age and childless, and the Napier title passed to other heirs and the baronetcy to his cousin, Nicolson of Tillicoutrie. Sir George, the sixth Baronet, served as a professional soldier in the Netherlands, retiring to live at The Hague in 1746. All three of his sons were officers in Scottish regiments in the service of the States of Holland. The last of this line, Sir David Nicolson, died at Breda in 1808'

The Carnock title then passed to another cousin, Major General Sir William Nicolson, only son of George Nicolson of Taviston. The general saw service in America, India, Ireland and Mauritius. He died in 1820 to be succeeded by his son, Admiral Sir Frederick Nicolson. The admiral's eldest son, Frederick, was killed fighting the Zulus in 1879, and it was his second son, Arthur, who succeeded in 1899. Sir Arthur had entered the diplomatic service, holding posts in Peking, Berlin, Constantinople and Tangiers, before becoming ambassador to Spain in 1904. He was ambassador to the imperial court at St Petersburg from 1906 to 1910, when he was appointed Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a post he held until 1916. He was showered with honor during his distinguished career, including the Orders of the Bath, St Michael and St George, Royal Victorian, and Indian Empire. Foreign governments also recognized his merit, awarding him some of their highest decorations, including the grand Cross of the French Legion of Honor. In June 1916 he was created Baron Carnock of Carnock. The fourth Lord Carnock who had inherited not only the peerage and baronetcy of Carnock, but also the baronetcy of Laswade and of that Ilk, followed his ancestors into the law, practicing as a solicitor in London. In 1985 he matriculated his arms, and was recognized by the Lord Lyon, King of Arms as Nicholson of that Ilk, chief of the Clan Nicholson.

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