

District MANX NATIONAL

(ELLAN VANNIN)

Tartan Designers Patricia McQuaid & D. Gordon Teall of Teallach

Date 1988

The Isle of Man, in the center of the Irish Sea, is a land of great beauty. It is a dependency of the British Crown and has its own parliament, Tynwald. The island was settled by Gaels in about AD 450 and a strong Celtic tradition persists upon this proudly independent island to the present day. Tartan, in the form of simple checks, was probably traditionally woven upon the island for centuries. More complicated designs were produced in St Judes and Andreas in the nineteenth century, mainly in connection with blankets and quilts, but no specific names seem to have been given them.

The idea of a Manx national tartan was first put forward by Lord Sempill in 1957 at a meeting of Ellynyn ny Gael (the Art of the Gaels). The design eventually chosen was that of Miss Patricia McQuaid, a well known hand weaver on the island. She took the colors of the island's scenery as her theme subsequently to be expressed in a poem by Ewan Kelly:

“Light blue for the sea in the shimmering sunlight
Green for the hills which slope down to the sea.
Purple for heather on far distant mountain.
Gold for the gorse so richly endowed.
Brown for the bracken in quiet lane and bye-way.
White for cottages so snug and content,
Dark blue the shadows that plan on the waters.
All these are the colors which nature has shown
To make up the tartan of our island home.”

The Manx National tartan was subsequently redesigned by Dr Gordon Teall of Teallach to make it more suitable for modern weaving techniques. This tartan has been accredited by the Scottish Tartans Society and is a Registered Trade Design

Taken from “District Tartans of Scotland”, by Gordon Teall & Philip Smith, Shephard-Walwyn (Publishers) Ltd.

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