



Clan Farquharson belong to the most powerful Clan confederation in Scotland, Clan Chattan, or the Clan of the Cat. Other members of this enviable alliance include the Clans Mackintosh, Macpherson, Macbean, and Shaw. The Clan Farquharson are intimately related to the Shaws, with the Farquharsons descending from Farquar, the 4th son of Alexander Shaw of Rothiemurchus, who lived at the beginning of the 15th Century. Farquar's son Donald wed Isobel Stewart, heiress to Invercauld, and so gained lands for the infant Clan. Clan Farquharson did not take long to rise to some prominence in the annals of Scottish history. Donald and Isobel's son, Finlay Mor, was slain at the Battle of Pinkie Cleugh in 1547, while carrying the Royal Standard of Scotland. Such was Mary, Queen of Scots esteem at this gallant sacrifice that she presented Finlay's widow, Beatrix Farquharson, with a clarsach. This treasured musical instrument is a traditional Celtic harp, and it is said that Beatrix was unparalleled in her mastery of the ancient art of the clarsach. The harp is now housed in Edinburgh's Royal Museum of Scotland, where it is displayed with the only other surviving clarsach, the Lamont harp.

The Farquharsons' relationship with Scottish culture and the Crown continued down through the centuries, with the royal Scottish palace of Balmoral once belonging to the Clan Farquharson estates. The Farquharson were staunch supporters of the exiled Stuart monarchs, and were prominent in the Jacobite Risings of the 18th Century. In 1715, John Farquharson of Invercauld, and 144 of his kin, joined the Clan Chattan forces at the Battle of Preston, but John was captured by the government

forces. Three decades later, Clan Farquharson rallied with their Chattan compatriots under the banner of Bonnie Prince Charlie, supplying 300 men to fight in the frontlines of Culloden. Such was the zeal of Farquharson support for the charismatic Prince Charlie that Anne Farquharson, wife of the Mackintosh chief, raised an army of Mackintoshes to fight on the Jacobite side. This was much to her husband's chagrin, who was away fighting the Jacobites in the government armies. Despite her husband's wishes, Anne sheltered the fugitive Prince after the Jacobite defeat at the Battle of Culloden in 1746.

It is testament to her spirit that she organised all her servants to divert an attack on her home designed to capture Charlie, while spiriting the Prince away to safety. The Farquharson Clan crest is the upper half of a lion rampant, rising out of a hat, with a sword in its paw. The Clan motto reads "Fide et fortitudine" meaning, in Latin "by fidelity and fortitude". The chief, Captain Alwynne Farquharson, resides at Braemar on royal Deeside, next door to the Queen's residence at Balmoral.

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