



Clan Kenneth, or MacKenzie, is one of the most influential highland clans in the history of Scotland, once possessing immense tracts of land in the beautiful north of Scotland. The Clan is said to have descended from Colin, progenitor of the Earls of Ross, who, after his death in 1278 was succeeded by his son, Kenneth, from which the Clan took the name MacKenny or MacKenzie, meaning in Gaelic "son of the fair". In 1362, the Clan lands in Kintail, Wester Ross, were granted to Murdoch, son of the third Earl Kenneth, from the King of Scotland, David II.

The Clan crest is a mountain inflamed and bares the motto, *Luceo Non Uro* - "I shine, not burn". The MacKenzie's loyalty to the Crown of Scotland in its efforts to control the strength of the Lord of the Isles, the chief of the MacDonalds, resulted in the clan's power and influence flourishing. Alisdair MacKenzie, summoned to meet King James I in 1427, was the most notable chief to support the king, and in 1491 Alisdair's son Kenneth defeated the Macdonalds in a fierce battle known as Blair-na-park. This gallant aid to the king was well rewarded with forfeited MacDonald lands. This early service against the enemies of the Crown of Scotland was to become a trend in later years as the MacKenzies grew to become one of the most eminent clans in the north of Scotland, and by the sixteenth century the Clan had spread their influence throughout the north, holding lands from the Outer Hebrides right across Scotland to the Black Isle.

In 1609, their chief was made Lord MacKenzie of Kintail, and in 1623 his eldest son was granted the title of Earl of Seaforth.

Scotland's highlanders have long been renowned for their fierce fighting spirit and the MacKenzies have well proven their highland blood.

The Clan has fought in many of Scotland's battles throughout the ages, from their support for James IV at the Battle of Flodden in 1513, and again at the Battle of Pinkie in 1571, to the support of a number of MacKenzie Clansmen for the cause of Bonnie Prince Charlie in the 1745 uprising.

After a series of chiefs dying without male heirs, the current chief of the MacKenzies is the Earl of Cromartie who resides at Castle Leod, Strathpeffer, just north of Inverness, Rosshire. The ancient seat of the MacKenzies, Castle Brahan, was demolished shortly after World War II, but the magnificent MacKenzie lands of Kintail have been preserved by the National Trust of Scotland for all to enjoy.

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