



On the north coast of the Isle of Skye, amid the rugged splendour of Macleod territory, stands the oldest inhabited castle in Scotland, Dunvegan Castle. This fortress, known to members of the Clan Macleod as the "hearth of the race", has been occupied by the Macleod Chiefs for over seven centuries, and has seen the Clan grow from its founding origins to become one of the most mighty clans in the Western Isles of Scotland. The Clan Macleod draws its origins from a lineage of fierce Viking kings, with the Clan descending from Leod, a younger son of Olaf the Black, the thirteenth century King of Man and the Northern Isles. Leod's marriage to the heiress of Macarailt of Dunvegan produced two sons, Torquil and Tormod, and each son propagated a line of the Clan. Tormod, the elder son, who claimed the chieftainship of the entire Clan, established the Macleods of Glenelg, Harris, and Dunvegan, while Torquil's descendants were the Macleods of Lewis, Waterish and Assynt. The Scots have long been renowned for their fierce fighting nature, and the Macleods have well proven their Scottish blood.

The Clan has fought in many of Scotland's battles, from their support of the great King Robert the Bruce in the War of Independence, to their service for Kings Charles I in the Civil War in the seventeenth century when 700 of their Clansmen died at the battle of Worcester. Charles II's ingratitude for the loyal exertions of the Macleods ensured that the Clan never supported a Stewart king again. Among the treasures of the Clan is the "fairy flag", a silk flag embroidered with gold, which is over 1000 years old. This flag, possibly a sacred relic from Constantinople, is said to have

mystical powers, including the ability to increase the number of Macleod clansmen when it is waved on a battlefield. Throughout the ages many Macleods have emigrated from Scotland.

One of the most famous examples of this is the migration of hundreds of Macleods under the Assynt minister, Norman Macleod, to Nova Scotia in 1817. After hearing of the wonders of the Antipodes, the 71 year old minister then migrated again with 747 members of his congregations to Australia, before they moved on to finally settle in Waipu, New Zealand. No matter how far spread the Clan has become, the links with their roots remain strong.

Dame Flora Macleod of Macleod, the 28th Chief, actively travelled the globe to establish and maintain the links with the many Macleods worldwide. She was succeeded in 1976 by her grandson, the present 29th Chief, John Wolridge Macleod of Macleod.

The symbol of the Macleods is a bull's head between two flags, and the Clan's tenacity is reflected in their proud motto "Hold Fast".

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