



It is from the ruggedly beautiful lands of Sutherland, in the far north of Scotland, that the great Clan Sutherland take their name. Sutherland is derived from the Norse "Sudrland" or "Southland", the name the Vikings gave to the land that they coveted so highly. The Clan claim descent from Freskin, whose grandson Hugh, was granted land in Moray by David I in 1130. Hugh's estates grew substantially when he acquired further lands in Sutherland, where he held the title of Lord of Sutherland. Hugh's success was mirrored by his son, who was created Earl of Sutherland by Alexander II around 1235.

The Clan's tradition of fealty to the Scottish Crown continued down through the centuries, and a Scots king could always count on his loyal Sutherland warriors during times of crisis. Kenneth, the 4th Earl of Sutherland, laid down his life beside the regent of Scotland at the Battle of Halidon Hill in 1333, defending his homeland against the English. The 5th Earl married Princess Margaret, daughter of the famed Scottish monarch Robert the Bruce, and sister of the childless David II. Their son was the heir to the Scottish throne, but was struck down by the Black Death before he could inherit his birthright.

The Sutherland's famous Castle of Dunrobin, was built in the 14th Century by Robert, the 6th Earl. Dunrobin was the seat of the Clan Sutherland, and set the scene for many of the conflicts that the Clan became involved in. The Sutherlands warred with the neighbouring Clan Mackay for over four centuries, after the 5th Earl was murdered at the hands of a Mackay. The old enemies only reconciled their differences amid the crisis of the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion, when the Clans joined forces in a combined effort to defeat the rebel armies. Dunrobin was briefly captured by Jacobite troops under the Earl of Cromarty's command, but they did not anticipate the tenacity of the Clan Sutherland warriors. The Sutherlands retook their precious castle, and captured the rebel Earl of Cromarty to face the King's justice. Dunrobin has undergone some changes over the centuries, particularly during the 19th Century, when it underwent a massive transformation. The tradition Scottish castle metamorphosed into a luxurious French chateau style palace under

the supervision of the architect Sir Charles Barry. Dunrobin was severely damaged by a fire in 1915, after which it was restored and partly remodeled. Today Dunrobin stands in its fairytale like splendour on the ancient Clan Sutherland lands.

The Clan Sutherland endured much hardship at the beginning of the 19th Century when the chiefship passed to the female line, and Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland, married the Marquess of Stafford. Stafford followed a policy of industrialisation, clearing the people from the lands to make way for his new ventures. In doing so, he sounded the death knell for the way of life enjoyed by the Sutherlands for centuries, and moved the clansfolk to the coast to work in his industries. Despite his ill-conceived strategies, some clansfolk came to respect him in his later years, and was created the 1st Duke of Sutherland in 1833.

The Chiefship of the Clan and the earldom of Sutherland rests with Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland, although the Dukedom was inherited by the Earl of Ellesmere, a descendant of the younger son of the 1st Duke. The Clan crest is of a cat, and the Clan Sutherland's bold motto reads "Sans peur", meaning "Without fear".

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