



Tartans and Badges

The clan tartan is MacThomas (which is quite distinct and not to be confused with MacTavish, Thomson or Mackintosh tartan, whatever some shopkeepers may say to the contrary). It is composed of blue and green divided by narrower bands of black; two adjacent lines of magenta crossing over the blue squares and two lines of lilac over the green. The tartan is available commercially in both ancient and modern shades (which respectively reproduce the softer shades anciently achieved by the use of the old vegetable dyes, and the darker colours made possible by the introduction of chemical dyes).

The crest-badge (as shown) consists of the Chief's crest within a buckled strap bearing his motto. (This crest may not be used without the strap and buckle since it is personal to the Chief, as are his arms. There is no such thing as 'Clan Arms'). It is normally worn as a bonnet badge or as a brooch for fastening ladies' tartan sashes, etc.

The plant badge of the clan is snowberry but in common with the rest of the Clan Chattan confederation, clansmen may also wear red whortleberry.

CLAN SOCIETIES CANNOT BE PRESERVED WITHOUT MORAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT. PLEASE HELP YOUR OWN CLAN BY JOINING THE SOCIETY AND BY BRINGING IN OTHERS WHO MAY BE ELIGIBLE.



Modern MacThomas



Ancient MacThomas



The Clan Society

The Clan MacThomas Society was founded in Edinburgh in 1954, for the purpose of developing interest in the Clan and to promote its welfare. The Chief of the Clan, who is a member of the Standing Council of Scottish Chiefs, is President of the Society.

Admission to membership is at the discretion of the committee, and is normally extended to all those having some connection with one or other of the clan surnames, although interested well-wishers without such connection would not necessarily be barred.

In return for this subscription each member receives a copy of the Society's annual magazine 'Clach a' Choilich' and periodic newsletters. The Society holds regular gatherings in the Clan's ancient lands in Glenshee. Full details of these and of other gatherings around the world can be found on the website.

There are branches of the Society

in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States. In addition, members may purchase such items as MacThomas ties, shields, brooches, sashes, etc. which are supplied by the Society. A full list and prices may be obtained from the website.

There is a great opportunity for Members who want to do so to become actively involved in work for the Society or in investigation of their family history within the context of the clan, affording immense interest and satisfaction. However, none of this is compulsory, and many Members may wish to take a less active part, satisfied in the knowledge that their membership helps to make possible the broadening of the awareness of the clan and its history, and the preservation of its traditions.

To become a member, please complete and return the enclosed form or apply through the website.

The Clan MacThomas Society

The Clan Chief's Standard



Thomas, a Gaelic speaking Highlander, known as Tomaidh Mor (i.e. 'Great Tommy'), from whom the clan takes its name, was a descendant of the Clan Chattan Mackintoshes, his grandfather having been a son of William, 8th Chief of Clan Chattan.

Thomas lived in the 15th century, at a time when the Clan Chattan confederation had become large and unmanageable and so he took his kinsmen and followers across the

Grampians, from Badenoch to Glenshee where they settled and flourished, being known as McComie (phonetic form of the Gaelic MacThomaidh), McColm and McComas (from MacThom and MacThomas).

To the Government in Edinburgh, they were known as MacThomas and are so described in the Roll of the Clans in the Acts of the Scottish Parliament of 1587 and 1595 and MacThomas remains the official name of the Clan to this day.

MacThomas Sept names	
Combie	MacOmie
McColm	MacOmish
McComas	Tam
McComb(e)	Thom
McCombie	Thomas
McComie	Thoms
McComish	Thomson

Spittal of Glenshee

Banner of Andrew MacThomas of Finegand, 19th Chief



The early chiefs of the Clan MacThomas were seated at the Thom, on the east bank of the Shee Water opposite the Spittal of Glenshee, the site thought to be that of the tomb of the legendary Diarmid of the Fingalian saga, with which Glenshee has so many associations.

In about 1600, when the 4th Chief, Robert McComie of the Thom was murdered, the chiefship passed to his brother, John McComie of Finegand, about three miles down the Glen, which became the seat of the chiefs.

Finegand is a corruption of the Gaelic 'Feith nen Ceann' meaning 'burn of the heads' and refers to the time when some tax collectors were attacked by some clansmen, who cut off their heads and threw them in a nearby burn.

By now, the MacThomases had acquired a lot of property in the glen and houses were well established at

Kerrow and Benzian with shielings up Glen Beag.

The time was spent breeding cattle and fighting off those seeking to rustle them, one such skirmish, in 1606, being remembered as the Battle of the Cairnwell.

The 7th Chief was John McComie (Iain Mor) and his deeds have passed into the folklore of Perthshire and Angus, wherein he is generally known as 'McComie Mor'.

The legends surrounding this Highland hero abound: he puts to flight some tax collectors in defence of a poor widow single handed; he kills the Earl of Atholl's champion swordsman; he slays the man who insulted his wife; he fights his son in disguise to test his courage; he overcomes a ferocious bull with his bare hands; and he is even familiar with the supernatural.

Today, a large stone at the head of Glen Prosen is known as McComie Mor's Putting Stone, a nearby spring as McComie Mor's well, while at the top of Glen Beannie, a rock shaped like a seat is called McComie Mor's Chair.

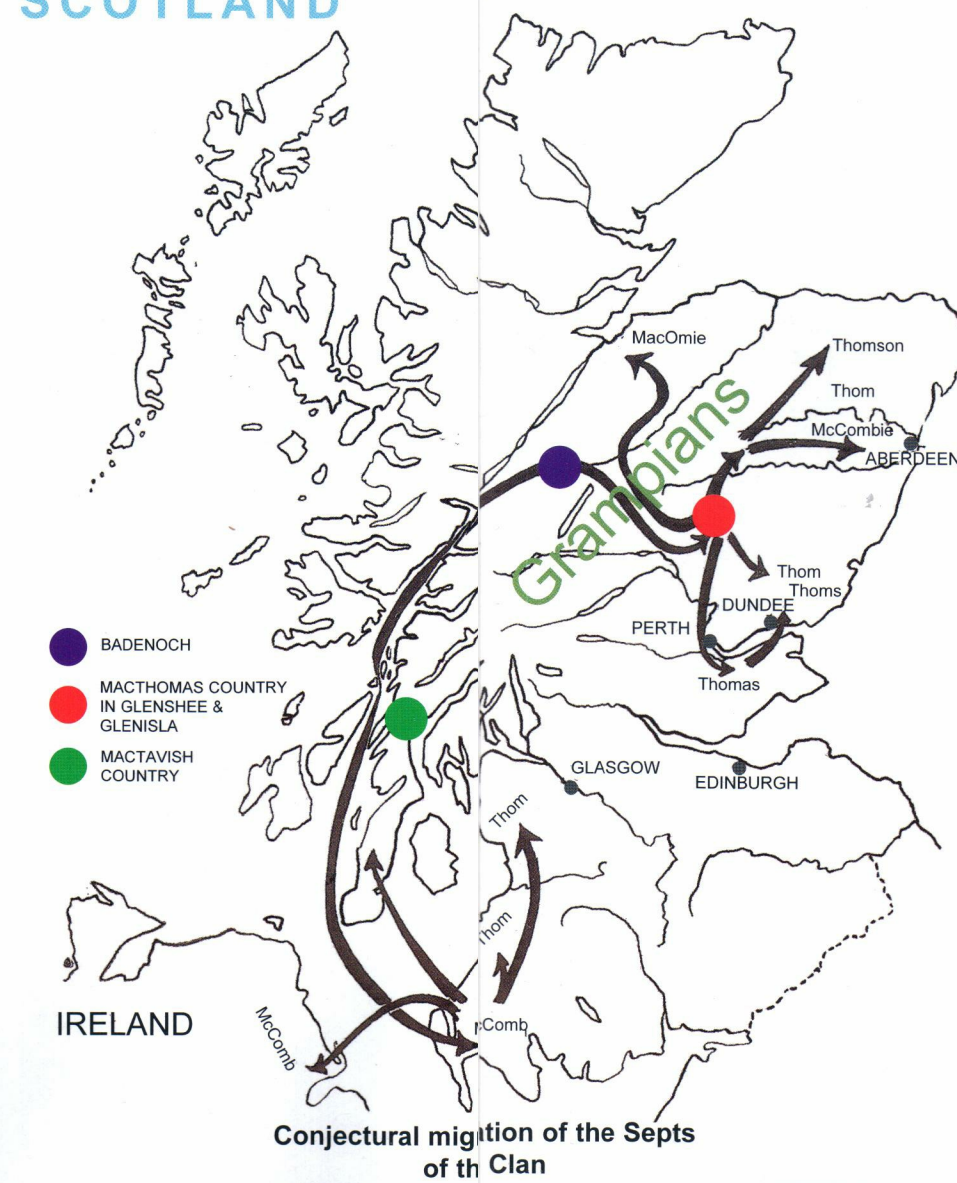
Iain Mor joined Montrose at Dundee in 1644, and fought for the King's cause throughout the campaign, personally capturing Sir William Forbes of Craigivar, but after the defeat at Philiphaugh, he withdrew from the struggle and devoted his energies to cattle raising. During this time the clan extended its lands and influence into Glen Prosen and Strathardle and Iain Mor purchased the Barony of Forter in

Glenisla from Lord Airlie.

Forter Castle had been burnt eleven years earlier, as recounted in the ballad, 'The Bonnie House of Airlie' and so Iain Mor made his home at Crandart, two miles north of the castle.

The Government of Cromwell won Iain Mor's admiration for the prosperity it brought Scotland but this soured his relationship with Airlie and on the restoration of Charles II in 1660, he found himself in trouble with parliament, who fined him heavily and at Airlie's instigation a law suit decreed that the

SCOTLAND



Canlochan Forest, part of the Forter estate, belonged to the latter.

This Iain Mor refused to recognise, continuing to pasture his cattle on the disputed land which Airlie had leased to Robert Farquharson of Broughdearg.

Broughdearg was Iain Mor's cousin but the dispute over the forest led to a bitter feud culminating in a skirmish at Drumgley, just west of Forfar, where at a spot, now known as McCombie's Field, Broughdearg was slain on 28th January 1673, along with two of Iain Mor's sons.

The fine, feud and the crippling law suit that followed ruined the MacThomases, and following Iain Mor's death, his remaining sons were forced to sell their lands.

The MacThomas chief is mentioned in Government proclamations in 1678 and 1681 but the clan was by now drifting apart with some going south into the Tay valley changing their name to Thomson or into Angus and Fife where they became Thomas, Thom or Thoms. The 10th Chief, Angus, who took the surname Thomas and later Thoms, settled in Northern Fife where his

family thrived as successful farmers until they moved to Dundee and became prosperous merchants, at the end of the 18th century, finally buying the estate of Aberlemno near Forfar.

Others moved north into



Forter Castle

Aberdeenshire, where the name became corrupted to McCombie as well as the anglicised forms Thom and Thomson. In Aberdeenshire, the principal MacThomas family were the McCombie's of Easterskene, who were descendants of the youngest of Iain Mor's sons, and it is one of their party, William McCombie of Tillyfour, M.P. for South Aberdeenshire at the end of the 19th century, who is today regarded as the father of the world famous Aberdeen-Angus breed of cattle.

Cathedral in Edinburgh and, upon his death in 1903, his vast fortune to St. Magnus Cathedral in Kirkwall, together with the Aberlemno estate. Having lost the Aberlemno estate, the chiefly family assumed the name MacThomas.

In 1954, the Clan MacThomas Society was formed and 13 years later, George's great nephew, Patrick Watt MacThomas, was once again officially recognised by the Lyon Court by the historic designation 'The MacThomas of Finegand'.

He died in 1970, being succeeded as 19th Chief, by his only son, Andrew MacThomas of Finegand. It was during his lifetime that the Clan's ancient gathering ground was purchased, the new bridge over Shee Water named after the family and the Clan's historic links with Glenshee firmly re-established. Thomas, his only son, was born in the late 1980's.

Glenshee Kirk



Armorial Achievement of PATRICK MACTHOMAS OF FINEGAND 18th Chief of the Clan MacThomas 1909 - 1970

