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# The Romance of Clan Crests and Mottoes

BY

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H.M. 320 (22).



LAURISTON CASTLE  
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21 Jan. 1929

Dear Dr. Morrison,

I inclose for your kind acceptance copy of a Lecture I delivered to The Gaelic Society of Inverness on Clan Crests and Mottos. It has been suggested to me that the lecture might be extended and a chapter with crest at head of each might be given to each clan - the whole to be issued as a book.

When you can find time will you give me your opinion on this project - and if you think it might catch on then can you give me any idea of any books where I could get stories of crests or mottos. Am I asking too much?

With all good wishes

I am,

Yours faithfully

A. Polson



## The Romance of Clan Crests and Mottoes.

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This is not a paper on Heraldry, but only a small collection of legends regarding the incidents which are said to account for the crests and mottoes of some of the Highland clans. It is hoped that the recital of these may induce some of the members of the clans not mentioned here to tell any story they may have heard regarding their crests, so that fellow clansmen may take a deeper interest in all that pertains to the crest which many of them so proudly wear.

The innate vanity which has prompted men of all races and ages to don ornaments and decorations must, among other things, be held responsible for the armorial bearings which have been, and are, worn by individuals, families, and communities, all of whom seem peculiarly sensitive as to the right of any other to impinge on their privilege of wearing the peculiar design chosen by themselves or an ancestor.

Heraldry is not itself an old science, but the desire for some distinguishing ornament accounts, among savages, for the painted designs on their bodies and on their shields; and men bearing similar designs were, and are, regarded as brethren.

There is ample evidence of the antiquity of these emblems. One wonders whether Jacob in blessing his sons had in mind the emblems of the tribes when he said: "Judah is a lion's whelp. He couched as a lion, as an old lion; who shall raise him up? Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse's heels."

Among the Greeks, Aeschylus makes one of the characters say:—

“ Frowning he speaks, and shakes  
 The dark crest streaming o'er his shaded helm  
 In triple wave; whilst dreadful ring around  
 The brazen bosses of his shield, impressed  
 With his proud argument:—A sable sky  
 Burning with stars; and in the midst full orb'd.  
 A silver moon; the eye of night o'er all,  
 Awful in beauty, forms her peerless light.”

Another character is described as follows:—

“ On his proud shield portrayed, a naked man  
 Waves in his hand a blazing torch; beneath  
 In golden letters, “ I will fire the city.”

Virgil writes:—

“ Thou muse, the name of Cinyras renew;  
 And brave Cupavo, followed but by few,  
 Whose helm confessed the lineage of the man,  
 And bore, with wings displayed, a silver swan.  
 Love was the fault of his famed ancestry,  
 Whose forms and fortunes in his ensigns fly.”

Herodotus writes:—“ And to them is allowed the invention of three things which have come into use among the Greeks: for the Carians seem to be the first who put crests upon their helmets and sculptured devices upon their shields.”

It is the same motive which makes the Life Guards wear horse-hair plumes, field marshals cocked hats, and game-keepers hats with a pheasant feather. It is not necessary to say more as to the antiquity of crests.

Nothing surprises one more than the strange mythical figures of which the armorial menagerie is full, and which must be due to an ancient civilization. One could quite well understand that a Fletcher—an arrow-maker—should have an arrow-head in his crest; a Fox, foxes' heads; an Oakes, acorns; and that military men should have swords, spears, or bomb-shells in their crests, and that churchmen should have ecclesiastical emblems like the crozier and the

mitre; but the origins of the figures which form the subject of coats-of-arms and crests are in great part unknown, and, as has been said, there are many legends to account for them. Crests varied in the same family at different times, and also in different branches of the same family, and some of those given here may belong to only one such branch.

At one time no one below the rank of knight had the right to use a crest, which was an addition to the coat-of-arms. The lesser gentry at one time had no crests, but Queen Elizabeth and the Stewarts granted so many that they diminished in value and dignity. The motto was really an ingenious expression of some particular conceit of the wearer, containing a hidden meaning, a maxim which shaped the wearer's destiny, or words used by the sovereign or chief on some particular occasion. No authority is needed to adopt one, and the adoption is left to the personal pleasure of each individual: and it is usually placed in a scroll over the crest.

To begin with, let us take the crest and motto of the MacLeods: a bull's head, and the motto "Hold Fast." Of it the clan may well be proud, as it commemorates a brave deed by an ancestor at the prompting of sympathy and mercy.

The story goes that one of the Dunvegan chiefs went to pay a visit to Argyle at Inverary. He chanced to arrive on the day appointed for the execution of one of Argyle's clansmen whom his chief had condemned to be gored to death by a bull. A sort of arena had been prepared, and Argyle with his guests occupied seats raised above the space in which the tragedy was to be enacted. The bull, bellowing with rage, was led in, and presently the man appeared. He was a fine looking fellow, and showed no signs of fear as he faced the animal. MacLeod implored Argyle to forgive the man. Argyle, with a cruel smile, said it was too late as the man was with the bull in the arena and nothing could save him. "If I save him," said MacLeod, "will you give him to me?" He sprang to his feet as he spoke, flung aside his cloak, and

prepared for prompt action. "Yes," said Argyle, "if you save him he is yours, but you go to your death." Without another word MacLeod sprang into the arena, rushed for the bull and seized one of its horns by the left hand, and as he did so a cry rang out, "Hold fast." The next instant MacLeod struck a blow with his dirk which reached the beast's heart. The bull was killed and the man was saved. Even now there are Campbells living at Dunvegan who claim to be descended from the man whom MacLeod saved, and a horn at Dunvegan is said to be one of those of the bull which MacLeod killed.

Dr William Mackay, in his "History of Urquhart and Glenmoriston," says that Conachar of Ulster was the progenitor of the families of Forbes, Mackay, and Urquhart; and in allusion to his wonderful feat of killing a wild boar of extraordinary ferocity and strength the three families in after years adopted the boar's head as their arms. Clans did sometimes change their crest, but though the Urquharts still have the boar's head and the motto, "Mean, speak, and doe well," the Forbes and the Mackays have certainly changed theirs. That of the Mackays is now a hand holding a dagger upright, and the motto *Manu forti* (*Lamh laidir*), which is said to have been adopted under the following circumstances:—

When Queen Mary was at Inverness, Mackay of Farr disregarded her summons to appear before her. Because of this a commission was granted to the Earl of Sutherland to invade the lands of Strathnaver. He besieged Castle Borve, which was held by a small force of twenty resolute clansmen, but the castle was taken and demolished. (Canon were used for the first time in the North of Scotland in this siege). It is said that when Mackay was asked by the Earl of Sutherland to exhibit his charter for his lands he put his hand, clasping his dirk, upon the table and exclaimed *Lamh laidir*, the Latin of which, *manu forti*, has been the motto of the clan ever since.



The cat is the crest of the Sutherlands and the Mackintoshes. In the case of the Sutherlands the cat has a paw uplifted as if to strike. Sir Robert Gordon of Aboyne, in his history of the Earldom of Sutherland, tells that when the Catti (a German tribe) were driven from their homes by the Romans in the first century, they were well received by the Scottish King, whom they assisted in all his valorous adventures. As a reward they got lands "in the remotest limits which lay void of inhabitants." In order to take possession they landed at the river Unes, now the Little Ferry, in Sutherland. Here the leader went ashore to spy the land, but was suddenly set upon by "monstrous large cats." The fight between man and cats was long and fierce, but in the end the man, who fought "without fear," managed to kill them all. Ever since, the cat has been the crest of the Sutherlands, with the French motto, *Sans peur*.

A stag's head appears in several Scottish crests. The Colquhouns of Luss got it for regaining the castle of Dumbarton by a stratagem. The story goes that the king asked the chief of Luss to recover it for him, and was answered, "If I can." After some planning he got up a mock chase by letting loose a stag on the level of the castle in the hope that it would attract the notice of the garrison, and that, on observing it, they would leave the tower to join the chase, not suspecting artifice, and thus afford an opportunity of recovering the castle. The result was completely successful. The garrison dashed forward to take part in the sport. During the absence of the soldiers, Colquhoun of Luss, with his followers, took possession of the castle and restored it to the King, who, as a reward, granted the armorial bearings which have ever since been borne by the Colquhouns of Luss, viz., a deer's head with the motto, *Si je puis*, and deerhounds as supporters.

The Mackenzies also have a deer's head for their crest and the Gaelic motto, *Cuidich an Rìgh* (Help the King), alleged to have been given under the following circum-

stances:—The founder of the family, Colin Fitzgerald, was, in 1265, with his sovereign hunting in the forest of Mar, when a stag, pursued by the hounds, made straight for the King. The brave Colin interposed, shot the stag in the forehead, and in gratitude he was granted the right to use as his armorial bearings a stag's head bleeding where the arrow pierced it, with two greyhounds as supporters.

In recent years the Black Rock of Fannich, with the words, "Truth will prevail," was adopted by Murdo MacKenzie of Dundonnell as his crest and motto after his successful but tedious litigation with Duncan Davidson of Tulloch about the Fannich fences.

One of the most numerous of the Highland clans is the MacDonalds, and several branches of the clan have their own crests, but the most famous is the *lanh dhearg* (the red hand). There are several versions of the story. One will suffice. Two brothers of the race of Colla Uais saw the Isle of Islay from their native Ireland, and both, at the same time, resolved to possess it. Each got his *birlinn* ready with its full complement of men, and the race began. When within a short distance of landing, one galley was a length ahead; whereupon the brother in the galley behind, seeing that the race was about to be won by the other, placed his left hand on the gunwale and, with his own sword, cut it off and threw it ashore, saying as he did so, "*Tha m' fhuil agus m' fheoil air tìr romhad*" ("My flesh and my blood are ashore ahead of you"). The red hand—*Lanh dhearg*—appears in the MacDonald arms in 1292. This bloody hand holding the cross-crosslet is the crest of the MacDonalds exclusively. The story of the cross is that an ancestor of the MacDonalds helped St Patrick to establish Christianity in Ireland, and in this way had the cross associated with his name.

The MacDonald motto is in Gaelic "*Air muir 's air tìr*"; in Latin, "*Per mare per terras.*"

The Glengarry MacDonalDs have as their crest a raven perched on a rock, while the Clan Ranald have as their motto, " My hope is constant in thee," which are the words Bruce is said to have addressed to the Lord of the Isles at the Battle of Bannockburn when giving him his order to charge. Sir Walter Scott in *The Lord of the Isles* writes:—

" Lord of the Isles, my trust's in thee  
As firm as Ailsa rock ;  
Rush on with Highland sword and targe,  
I with my Carrick spearmen charge,  
Go forward to the shock."

The motto of the Bruces is "*Fuimus*," perhaps in pathetic allusion to the fact that they *were* kings.

The Macleans claim descent from one Gill-Eathain na Tuaighe, so called from his carrying as his ordinary weapon a battle-axe; and they have for their crest a battle-axe surrounded by a laurel or cypress branch. This they are said to have adopted from the following incident in their founder's career:—

Gill-Eathain was engaged, with others, in a stag hunt at Beinn Talaidh in Mull, and wandered away from the rest of the party in pursuit of his quarry. The mountain suddenly became enveloped in mist and he lost his way. For three days he wandered about unable to recover his track. On the fourth day, utterly exhausted, he crept under a laurel bush, where, after fixing the handle of the battle-axe in the earth, he lay down and slept. On the evening of that day his friends saw the head of the battleaxe above the bush, and found Gill-Eathain asleep on the ground with his arm round the handle.

This clan has two slogans, "*Bàs no beatha*" (" Death or life ") and " Another for Hector." The second slogan had its origin in an incident, at the battle of Inverkeithing in 1651, which demonstrates the devotion of the clansmen to their chief. In July of that year Cromwell's forces, under

General Lambert, opposed the Scots army, under Holborn of Menstrie. Holborn with his cavalry fled soon after the battle began. Sir Hector Roy Maclean of Duart was there with 800 men. They were encircled by the English and were being cut to pieces. Sir Hector's clansmen saw that the English objective was to get their chief. They therefore flocked round him, and at every attempt on their chief's life a clansman threw himself upon the enemy and fell, one after the other exclaiming "Another for Hector" until eight Macleans lay dead ere Sir Hector himself fell.

" Sir Hector Roy, the stout Maclean,  
Fought, one to ten, but all in vain,  
His broad claymore unsheathing ;  
Himself lay dead 'mid heaps of slain,  
For Charles at Inverkeithing."

In clan fights the MacFarlanes were generally on the losing side, but at the battle of Langside they were instrumental in turning the tide of battle at the crucial moment. It is told that MacFarlane came up with three hundred of his men, and falling on the flank of the Queen's army threw them into disorder, and thus contributed to the deciding of the fortunes of the day. The MacFarlanes captured three of Queen Mary's standards in the fray. The chief's reward was not a very tangible one, and is scarcely creditable to the Regent Moray, being merely a crest which flattered his vanity, a demi-savage holding in his right hand a sheaf of arrows and pointing with his left to an imperial crown. The motto-borne upon a scroll above the head of the savage is "This I'll defend."

The MacFarlanes were great cattle-lifters, and their gathering tune, "*Thogail nam bó,*" has been worded as follows:—

" We are bound to drive the bullocks,  
All by hollows, hirsts, and hillocks,  
Through the sleet and through the rain ;

When the moon is beaming low  
 On frozen lake and hill of snow,  
 Boldly and heartily we go;  
 And all for little gain."

This is why the moon has been called "MacFarlane's buat" or lantern.

The wild boar's head is another popular crest. I don't know that it is certain whether the Chisholms came to Inverness-shire from the Borders or from Caithness, but it is claimed that they had the boar's head as their crest before they came. It is said that at one time Glenconvinth was infested with wild boars which were a terror to the people, who, on one occasion, assembled to hunt out the last of them. Among the number was the Master of Chisholm. After sharpening his spear, a young man advanced to kill the animal, which was seen not far off. His courage, however, failed, and then young Chisholm asked to be permitted to attack it. With sharpened spear he went forward undismayed by his antagonist, and, as it was in the act of springing, he pierced the animal in the neck and then stood on the body. Since then, at any rate, the crest of the Chisholms is a right hand holding a dagger on the point of which is a boar's head; and the motto is "*Feros ferio.*"

The Mackinnons, also, have a boar's head with a shin bone in its mouth, which was adopted as their crest in memory of the following legendary incident. Mackinnon of Strathaird in Skye and six men were out after deer, and when the hunt was over they went into a cave where they roasted some venison. While they were eating it, the mouth of the cave was darkened by a huge boar, evidently ready to attack them. His men retreated to the innermost recesses of the cave, but Mackinnon remained ready to face the boar. Just as it was in the act of charging, he thrust the shin bone down the animal's throat and choked it. Hence the crest. The motto is in Latin "*Audentes fortuna juvat*" ("Fortune favours the daring").



In the case of the Duke of Argyll, whose crest is a boar's head, the story of its origin goes back to the time of the Fenian heroes. The ancestor of the Argyll clan was then known as a Diarmid. This Diarmid is usually accounted as one of the followers of the great Fionn mac Cumhaill. Unhappily Fionn's wife fell in love with Diarmid while he was one night at a feast in her husband's castle. Fionn found this out, and consulted a witch as to what he could do to get rid of Diarmid without offence. She told him that the Fianna had a wonderful boar on whose back was a poisoned bristle, and that if he could get Diarmid to measure it the bristle would prick him and he would die. A few days after this Fionn, after some talk, wagered that the length of the boar was so many feet. Diarmid disagreed as to the length, set out to measure it, and returned proclaiming that he was right. Fionn was furious, and asked him how he had measured it. He replied, "From snout to tail." "Ah!" said Fionn, "come and let me see you measure it from tail to snout." Diarmid went, and in measuring it in that direction—against the set of the bristles—the poisoned bristle pierced his foot, and soon thereafter he was dead. Retribution came to Fionn at the hands of an army which swarmed over from Ireland, and the Fianna, not now having the help of Diarmid, were slain. The boar's head was adopted by Diarmid's descendants as their crest, and has so remained ever since, with the motto "*Nc obliviscaris*" ("Lest thou forget").

The Grants got their name from an extensive moor in Strathspey (the country of the Grants), which was in Gaelic *Sliabh Grianais*—the plain of the sunshine. Druidical remains there indicate that it was a place consecrated to sun worship, and the crest of the Grants—a burning mount—is believed to be just Beltane fires. Their motto is "Stand fast, Craigellachie."

As showing the power of the old slogan on members of the clan, a tale is related of its effect on a former President of the U.S.A., Ulysses S. Grant. During a presidential election he was making a tour through one of the doubtful States and was travelling on an observation car. His political friends were delivering addresses to crowds at the stations, as the President himself was no great speaker. At one station a Scotsman and an American citizen were talking of the grim, taciturn soldier, Grant, who, the American said, was devoid of all human emotion. The Scotsman said, "I believe I can rouse him to show emotion and enthusiasm." A bet was laid. When the car with the President stopped, the Scotsman lifted his hat and shouted "Stand fast Craigellachie." The effect was instantaneous. A glow suddenly appeared on the President's face; gone was the warrior's grimness, and, returning the salutation, he smilingly bowed his acknowledgment. The Scotsman then explained that the magic of his words lay in the fact that they were the war cry of Clan Grant. The bet was paid.

The Macphersons have a ship as an armorial figure, though it is not likely that they ever were a seafaring clan. They carry the cat as their crest, and it is possible that this refers to their being driven by stress of weather on to the Caithness coast; and the ship, to their adventurous voyage thither. Their motto is "Touch not the cat bot a glove." In their arms they carry a dagger, point up, for killing the Cummings.

The Camerons have for their crest a right arm in armour grasping a dagger, and the motto, "*Pro rege et Patria.*" During the Peninsular War there was added a Highlander waist deep in water, sword in one hand, and a banner with "92" on it and the word "Arriverette," the place on the banks of the Gauve de Meleon which Lochiel, leading his men, forded in the face of a very superior body of the enemy. The words of the Royal patent conferring the distinction authorised him to bear "above the cognisance of Lochiel a

representation of the town of Aire, in allusion to his glorious services on the 2nd March, 1814, when, after an arduous and sanguinary conflict, he succeeded in forcing a superior body of the enemy to abandon the said town; and subsequently he received an address from the inhabitants expressive of their gratitude."

The Morrisons have as their crest an oak branch, and their badge is "*Sgoid cladach*." The story is that the first of this clan was of Scandinavian origin, and was a ship-wrecked traveller who, with his wife and child, was cast ashore on the Island of Lewis on a piece of driftwood, and their crest and badge is possibly a reminder of this. The Morrisons held the hereditary Breeveship of Lewis down to the year 1613.

The Leslies tell that they were asked by Queen Margaret to adopt their motto of "*Grip fast*" in memory of her deliverance by the founder of the family, Bartholomew Leslie. As the Queen on one of her journeys was crossing a swollen river she was thrown from her horse and was being carried down stream. Leslie plunged in, seized her by the girdle, and, as he was with difficulty bringing her to the bank, she exclaimed "*Grip fast*," which he did and saved her.

The Stewarts of Appin have on their arms what Sir Walter Scott calls "*The Stewarts' chequer*," the ancient cognisance of the Stewarts which appears on the seal of Alan, the second High Stewart of Scotland, appended to his charter to Melrose Abbey about 1190; and Laing says it is perhaps the earliest instance of this well-known bearing of the Stewart family. The chequer represents the chessboards which of old the accountants in the King's office of Exchequer made use of in calculating their accounts, from which probably the Exchequer had its name, as the office was under the charge of the High Steward.

The MacGregors have for their motto "*E'en do and spair nocht*," and in this case the story goes that when William



the Lion was out hunting a wild boar rushed to attack him. Sir Malcolm asked permission to encounter the animal. The King answered in the words of the motto. MacGregor immediately tore up a pine sapling and killed the boar. For this the King gave Sir Malcolm liberty to use his words as a motto, and this the clan has done ever since. In their coat-of-arms there is a pine sapling torn up by the roots.

The crest now borne by the Duke of Atholl is a demi-savage holding in his right hand a dagger and in his left a key, with the motto, "Furth, Fortune, and fill fetters."\* Originally this was a Stewart crest and motto, and was first worn by the second son of Robert III of Scotland. That monarch found that if there was to be peace in the kingdom the chiefs of the Western Isles, who acted as monarchs in their own domains, must be made to feel that the laws of the realm must be supreme. For this purpose he gathered an army, placed his second son in command, and, in parting with him, spoke the words of the motto, which may be interpreted, "Go forward, may good fortune attend you, and bring back many prisoners and hostages to be kept under lock and key." As was promised him, on his successful return he was made Earl of Athole and got this crest. In the course of time there was no heir male to succeed to the earldom; only a daughter—who married a Murray, William, the second Earl of Tullibardine. This Tullibardine was appointed Hereditary Sheriff of Perthshire in 1600 for rescuing the King at Perth from the attempt of the Earl of Gowrie; and Charles I revived the Earldom of Atholl in the issue of this Countess of Tullibardine. Thus the original Stewart crest became the crest of the Murrays. In 1893 the name was changed from Athole to the original Atholl.

\* A recent translation of the last word of the motto, "fetters," is that it ought to be "ferteris," an obsolete word meaning "small box," so that the motto may mean, "Go forth, fortune, and fill thy coffer."

Nearly three centuries ago there was a great bagpipe competition held in Kintail—the home of the Macraes—and pipers from far and near came to compete. The supreme test was to play a particular tune all the way up to the top of a hill in the neighbourhood. Two of the competitors were nearing the top together, but one of them—a Macrae—was a step or two in front of his rival, who in his chagrin, pulled out his dagger and pricked the other's bagpipe: but Macrae managed to get his foot on the topmost rock just as the wind failed and exclaimed “Sguir-òran,” which is now the name of this hill and the slogan of the Macraes. From this incident the Macraes then took for their crest a bared right arm with the hand holding a dagger, and the motto “*Fortitudine.*”

The name Gordon with the boars' heads in the Duke of Richmond and Gordon's coat-of-arms originated, according to an old story, in a way which shows that the first of that name was hardy, brave, witty, and romantic—a trait of the clan to this day. It is said that when the wild boars had increased to such an extent in the south of Scotland that they became a public menace, a reward was offered for every boar's head brought to Holyrood, and hunting the wild boar became the favourite sport of the young gallants of the time. Among other hunters was the young Lochinvar, who had a double incentive, as he was in love with the beautiful Margaret Scott, the daughter of Sir James Scott, whose estate was pestered by one of the most ferocious of these brutes. There was, however, another claimant for fair Margaret's hand, the wealthy James Ogilvie. Margaret favoured the poorer Lochinvar, and the father in a quandary at last promised her to the one who should kill this wild boar. Both set out, but Lochinvar came first on the prey, chased it for many a mile, and, when it turned at bay, he, after a stubborn fight, laid it low, and then, exhausted by the chase and a wound, lay down to rest, but before doing so he cut out the animal's tongue. As he lay asleep Ogilvie passed, saw the boar dead,

quietly cut off the head, hurried back to Sir James, claimed his bride, and then made off to Holyrood to ask for the King's promised reward. When Lochinvar awoke he saw the trick played on him, and at once started in pursuit of his rival. When he arrived at Court he found that Ogilvie was there before him. Lochinvar was, however, after some little trouble, admitted to the Royal presence, stated his case, and asked for justice. Ogilvie was recalled and denounced Lochinvar as a cheat. The King was puzzled, and asked if there were any witnesses. Lochinvar replied that the boar would speak for him, and asked that its head be produced. When this was done Lochinvar showed that the tongue was awaiting, and produced it from his pouch. The King was satisfied; the reward was refunded by Ogilvie, who was then imprisoned as a cheat. The King then asked the happy Lochinvar how he managed to kill such a wild animal, and Lochinvar replied, "May it please your Grace, I just gored him down with my spear."

"You are a brave man," said the King: "and as a mark of my appreciation of your courage you shall henceforth be known as the Knight of 'Goredown.'" In course of time this got shortened into "Gordon."

It is said that the son of this man and his wife, Margaret Scott, was "the young Lochinvar who came out of the west."

The Gordons now claim to be "Cocks of the North," a title which the Sinclairs of Caithness, who have a Gallic cock as their crest, say ought to be theirs. Why it should be called "Gallic" they can scarcely explain unless it be that this clan is of French origin.

The senior branch of the Sinclair clan and several of the collateral branches carry, on the authority of the Lyon Office, a "Cock proper" as crest. The crest was not always carried as at present like a proper barn-door fowl. In 1566 George Sinclair fourth Earl of Caithness, used arms quartered with those of his wife, Lady Elizabeth Graham, daughter of the Earl of Montrose, and in these the cock is shown full face with wings

extended. The family tradition is that the Earls of Caithness, until the battle of Flodden, were "Cocks of the North." After that battle the clan became a very small one, as all the fighting men were killed, and the Duke of Gordon then assumed the designation.

There is a Maclellan Castle in Kirkcudbright, and the Maclellans, once a numerous clan in Galloway, held it for long. The Irish, or at least Saracens or gipsies from Ireland, made incursions into their territory, and were so troublesome that the people had to ask the aid of King James II, who promised the estate of Bombie to the man who slew the formidable leader of the marauding band. Young Maclellan got to know how fond this leader was of strong drink, and arranged that on their next coming his men should flee before them, lead the pursuers over a dry area beyond which was a well, which he carefully filled with spirits. The leader, thirsty after the chase, reached it, tasted, drank his fill, and while thus drugged was slain by young Maclellan, who took for his crest a Moor's head on the point of a sword. When he went to claim the estate the King said he could remember no such promise, but was told to "Think on," which became the motto of the Maclellans.

Of the origin of the motto of the Cuninghames, "Over, Fork Over," tradition has it as follows:—An early ancestor escaped from his pursuers and saved his life by plunging into a hayrick, having just time to ask the workers to fork the hay over him before his enemies appeared. Thus his life was saved. Another form of the story is that an ancestor thus saved the life of Prince Malcolm, who, when he became King, gave him the arms and motto now used. In any event, it is the case that the Cuninghame arms display a shake-fork.

One would like to hear the stories which account for the crests of such clans as the Frasers, Munroes, Macgillivrays, MacNeils, &c., &c. One more may be given. When Bruce at Bannockburn had to resort to stratagem to stem the tide of English horse, Sir Malcolm

Drummond was entrusted with the duty of scattering caltrops on the field. These were pieces of iron formed with four spikes so that whichever way they lay one point should be pointing upward, and so lame the English horses. When performing his task Sir Malcolm humorously remarked that they would make the English "gang warily," which has since been the motto of the Drummonds, and after the battle a field strewn with caltrops was added to the Drummond armorial bearings.

Though the story of how the thistle became the emblem of Scotland is generally well known, it may be given once more. In the days when the Norse Vikings strove to be supreme in Scotland, the Scottish army one night lay encamped on the banks of the Tay near Stanley in Perthshire, at the spot now known as "Thistle Bridge." Across this bridge, or rather the trap dyke which then existed, these invaders cautiously proceeded, hoping to take the Scottish camp by surprise. As luck would have it, one of them trod on a thistle with his bare feet, at which even the hardy Norseman could not withhold an "O! O!" loud enough to warn the Scotsmen of the presence of their enemies, whom they quickly routed. There and then the thistle was adopted as the emblem of Scotland, and soon there was added the motto, "Touch me gin ye daur," which, when Latin became fashionable, was rendered "*Nemo me impune lacessit.*"

Heraldry sheds a side light on some parts of Highland history, and so far as it induces clansmen to imitate their forefathers in performing acts of bravery, kindness, and courtesy it is to be commended, but, when coats-of-arms emblazoned on buttons, coaches, and notepaper, indicate that there is a strong dividing line between twopence and twopence-half-penny, it is contemptible. Happily, through the spread of education, the spirit of brotherhood grows, and let us hope that "the first of the sciences," as heraldry has been called, will not prove a hindrance to the coming of the time when "man to man, the world o'er, shall brothers be for a' that"!

