

# WHO ARE THE GRAHAMS?

The early history of the Grahams in Scotland is not easily understood. One theory is that there were similar names from the Celtic "Greamach" (grim) or the Saxon Gram (fierce). There is an oral tradition in Scotland that the daughter of a Gryme married a King of the Scots, Fergus II. The Celts and Saxons disappeared or became integrated with the descendants of "Lez Grames" of Norman origin. Some say that the original Grahams in Scotland were Picts, established long before the Normans came into Scotland.

Documented information has established the Norman descent of the Grahams. The Normans were originally of Viking descent and a Graham lineage goes back into Scandinavia.

Listed in the "Doomsday Book of William the Conqueror" is a place that was known as "Graeg Ham" in the 10th century in England, now known as Grantham.

The Normans were in Scotland in the 12th century. William de Graham personally witnessed the signing of the charter founding the Abbey of Holyrood in 1128. From this line descended the Montrose line of Grahams, one of the most distinguished families of Scotland.

Twice the Grahams married into the royal family. From these came some notable men. First among them was Sir John Graham, right hand man to the Great William Wallace. Sir John was killed in the Battle of Falkirk in 1298. Second was the Great Marquis of Montrose, James Graham, poet, who was the most distinguished soldier of his time. He was martyred in Edinburgh in 1650. Third was John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, "Bonnie Dundee," commander of the Scots who last defeated the English at the Battle of Killiekrankie (Killiecrankie). In John Stewart's book, "The Grahams," he states that "most Scottish clans would be proud to have one great hero. The Grahams have three." There were, of course, many more besides these three towering figures.

Stewart also wrote, "It is remarkable that the early Grahams were one and all exceedingly capable men. In an age when the reputation of many great public figures, alas, that of most of the Scottish nobility, were sullied by deeds of violence, and often deeds of blackest treachery, it is refreshing to find that the Grahams stand out as loyal and true to the courses they espoused.

Their story is not one of rapid rise to power through royal favor, or even at the expense of their peers, but rather a gradual, steady rise based on their undoubted ability and worthiness which seems to have endured from one generation to another."

## NAMES OF THE GRAHAM DESCENDANTS

In Scotland the families of Grahams are listed as [Graham](#), [Grahame](#), [Graeme](#), [Grim \(Grimes\)](#), [Menteith](#) and [Montrose](#).

There were other great families of Grahams, the most notable probably being the Graemes of Inchbrakie. Patrick Graeme, 7th Graeme of Inchbrakie, was called "Black Pate" from powder burns on his face. He was the right hand man of the Great Marquis. These Grahams reputedly knocked a hole in the Antonine Wall which had been built by the Romans. The wall later became known as "Grymes Dyke". Part of Inchbrakie's coat of arms is a broken wall. The last of this line was Alexander, Admiral of the Blue, and close friend of Admiral Nelson.

The Fintry Grahams descended from Sir William de Graham and Princess Mary, daughter of King Robert III. Their most renowned descendant was the brilliant soldier John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee.

The Mentieth Grahams were descendants of the Earl of Menteith, one of the oldest peerages in Scotland, and descendants of Prince David, eldest son of King Robert II and Elizabeth Muir. The 8th Earl was unmarried and at his death the estate went to Montrose and the peerage line stopped.

There were many Cadet branches and Septs of the major families. The list of Septs, although incomplete, include: [Airth](#), [Allardyce](#), [Blair](#), [Bonar](#), [Bonnar](#), [Bonner](#), [Bontein](#), [Bontine](#), [Buntain](#), [Bunting](#), [Hadden](#), [Haldane](#), [MacGibbon](#), [MacGilvernock](#), [Menteith](#), [Monteath](#), [Pye](#), [Pyott](#), [Pitcairn](#) and, of course, [Graeme](#) and [Grahame](#).

Grahams are scattered all over the world, especially in former British colonies and territories. In every land they have distinguished themselves as statesmen, writers, clergymen, scientists and in every other honorable profession and career. Many are living today and are carrying on the traditions of the "Gallant Grahams" of old.

# CLAN GRAHAM SOCIETY



## LOYAL & UNITED

### MEMBER

Clans and Scottish Societies of Canada  
Council of Scottish Clan Associations

### CHIEF

An Greumach Mor  
His Grace the 8th Duke of Montrose

### NE OUBLIE

"Do Not Forget"

# ABOUT THE CLAN GRAHAM SOCIETY

The Clan Graham Society, Inc. is an organization of the descendants of the families of the "Gallant Grahams" of old Scotland. Its membership is made up of those Grahams who know and who propagate the very distinguished accomplishments and honorable ideals of the Grahams, past and present. Because of the large number of Grahams in Scotland their wide dispersion all along the Highland line was from Montrose on the North Sea to Loch Lomond (and further west), down past Glasgow through the Lowlands to Carlisle on the Border. Membership in the Clan Graham Society is open to those from any land and country who can claim Graham ancestry.

## PURPOSE

The major purpose of the Society is to educate by sharing our Scottish history, ideals, and culture of our ancestors, and by keeping abreast of present-day events. Other objectives include:

- To promote the general interests of the Clan and to cultivate the spirit of kinship, friendship and social intercourse among the Clan Graham members throughout the United States and Canada, with those of the Graham family of Scotland and throughout the world.
- To inspire among members and descendants the pride and spirit of their Scottish ancestors embodied in their history and ideals.

## ORGANIZATION & POLICY

The affairs of the Society are directed by the Council which is comprised of elected and appointed officers. Elected officers are four Executive Officers, three Trustees, and six Members-At-Large. Officers are elected on an alternate basis at each Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Policy, operations and procedures are governed by the Bylaws of the Society which are adopted and

amended by action of the membership at an AGM. The Clan Graham Society meets annually during a Gathering of the Clan. The Council may change the time and place of the AGM with prior adequate announcement.

## MEMBERSHIP & DUES

Regular membership into the Clan Graham Society is open to all persons, either male or female, being 18 years of age or older, who bear the name or are descendants of Graham or the Graham Septs. Those persons who do not qualify for Regular membership, but who have a legitimate interest in the purposes of the Society, may become Associate members.

Membership is only \$20 per year for Regular and Associates, including spouse and children under age 18. Annual dues are renewed every July. Membership in the Society helps maintain the history and heritage of the "Gallant Grahams". Each membership will receive the electronic newsletters, special access to Graham themed Scotland trips, historical and/or genealogy assistance.

Membership applications may be downloaded from our website or ask for one at our Clan tent.

## GENEALOGICAL ASSISTANCE

The Clan Graham Society can assist Grahams in their genealogical research for their "roots". We ask each member to complete a genealogical chart as far back as possible. All genealogical records submitted are entered into the database and administered by the Society genealogy team. Information is provided to current members only and is for Society use only.

## TARTANS

The official tartan of the Clan Graham Society is the Graham of Montrose. The official Society crest is that of Montrose. The Graham of Menteith tartan may be used also. This provision is made as a courtesy to the descendants of the Menteith Graham (peerage line is extinct). The ancient and weathered forms of the Montrose and Menteith tartans may be used. The ancient is an attempt to reproduce the colors of the older vegetable dyes.

## OFFICIAL COLORS & CLAN PLANT

The colors for the Clan Graham are gold ("or") and black ("sable"). The armorial bearing for each Graham who is granted arms by the Lord Lyon King of Arms has a modified arrangement of the following: the gold shield and three gold scallops on a black field. Grahams who have not been granted arms may display a simple gold shield with three gold scallops on a black field.

The clan plant is the True Laurel (*Laurus Nobilis*), which is indigenous to Scotland and not poisonous. The True Laurel is similar to that seen on Greek and Roman noble heads--very fitting as a Graham Clan plant.

The Society newsletter from Canada is aptly titled The Laurel.

## ARMORIAL BEARINGS

On June 8, 1994, the Clan Graham Society was granted their own armorial bearings by the Lord Lyon King of Arms of Scotland. The armorial bearing is on the front of this brochure. The shield of gold has three chained or linked pellets in black with a gold escallop on each pellet. The crest is a falcon, as in our Chief's Arms, grasping a chain to indicate "drawing and keeping the clansmen together." The motto in Gaelic, "Rioghail Agus Maraon," is translated as "Loyal and United," which emphasizes "keeping the clan together" and "loyalty to our Chief." The armorial bearing may only be used to identify official Society representation and is protected under the laws and regulations in Canada and the United States from misuse.

## WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

Keep connected with the Clan Graham Society through our official website and social media.

**Web:** [www.clangrahamsociety.org](http://www.clangrahamsociety.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/ClanGrahamSociety/](http://www.facebook.com/ClanGrahamSociety/)

Questions? Can be sent to  
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