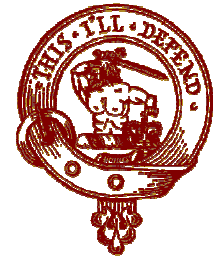


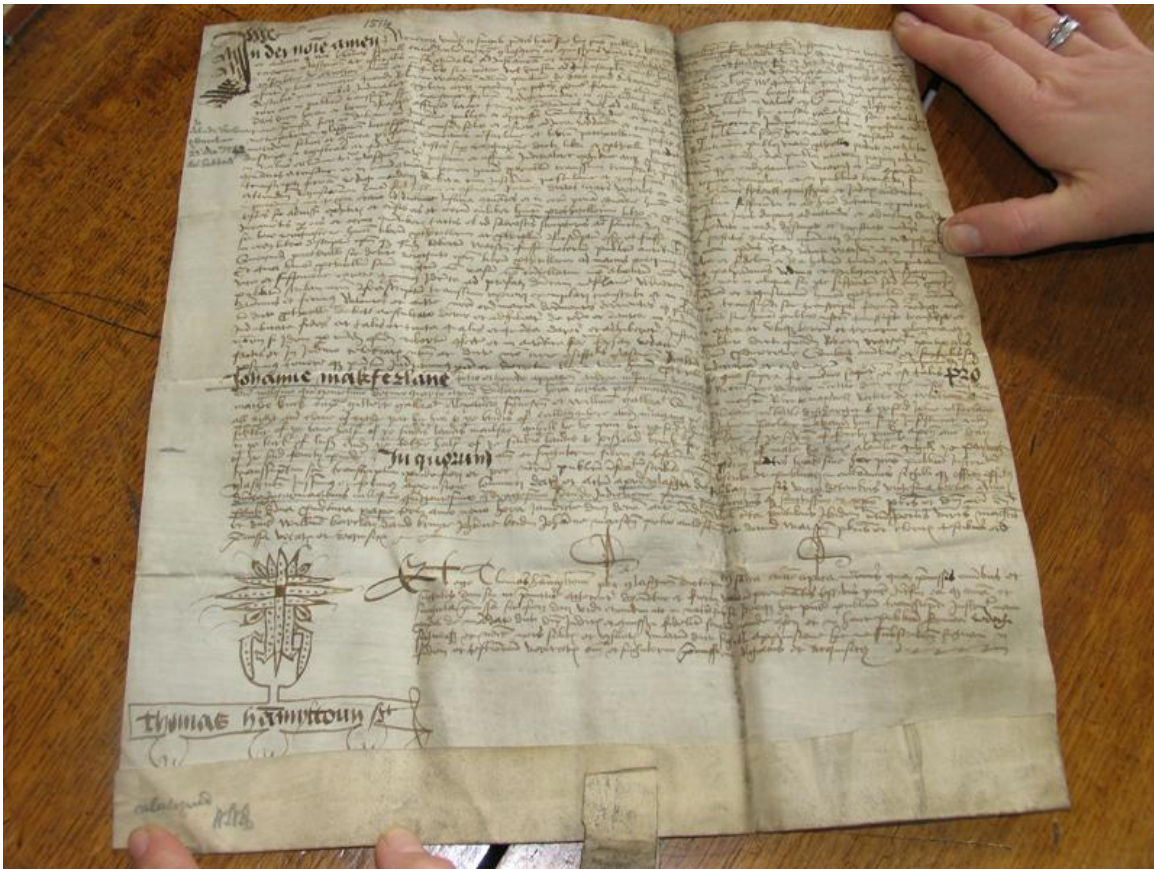
MacFarlane's Lantern

Clan MacFarlane Society, Australia, Inc.



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The Morlaggan Document 1514



(Acknowledgements: High Morlaggan Project Team)

Our front page this month shows a picture of an ancient document dated 1514 relating to the old MacFarlane lands at Morlaggan on the shores of Loch Long, a few miles south of Arrochar ancient seat of Clann Pharlainn. In particular, it refers to a branch of our clan located at Tullechental at the western end of Glen Douglas.

During 2009 a team of dedicated local residents, supported by professional archaeologists, set to work among the ruins of the old farming settlement of High Morlaggan. The dig came about due to the inquisitiveness (some might say 'nosiness') of two local ladies who carried out the initial inquiries and thereafter acquired financial backing from the local authorities ~ primarily the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park.

Part of the inquiry also produced the above document from archives in Glasgow, showing a 1514 transfer of the lands by way a mortgage pledge from one Macfarlane to his Clan Chief in Arrochar. More details of this most interesting project are included in this issue.

Morlaggan 'Dig' Project 2009

During November of 2009 a team of eager volunteers carried out a research dig at High Morlaggan an old MacFarlane settlement site located above the eastern shores of Loch Long, Argyll and Bute District (originally Dunbartonshire). The dig appears to have been instigated by two determined local ladies, Fiona Jackson and Sue Furness, pictured in the group, either side of the lady (named Marion) in the centre of the photograph -- Fiona is wearing the red muddy jacket and woolly hat, she is a freelance writer/editor and has lived at nearby Morlaggan Cottage for the past ten years.

The High Morlaggan Project, sponsored by Scottish Natural Heritage and financed by Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, was set up in 2008, at which time a proper survey of the farming site was carried out by professional archaeologists who also mapped the area and generally advised on a field work plan.

The site first appears on record during the early 16th century and finally abandoned around 1916 at which time only a shepherd occupied one of the old buildings.

However, between these dates it has been on record at various times, especially among the papers of our Clan

MacFarlane until 1784 when the clan estates were sold to Ferguson of Raith, yet some MacFarlanes lived on there for some time after.

Since the beginning of this year we have been in regular touch with Sue and Fiona. From our own recorded Clan history we recognised that the site was likely to have been associated with the MacFarlanes of Tullichentaul, a cadet branch of the House of Arrochar. In this issue, we are happy to report on the valuable research carried out by Fiona, Sue and the many lay volunteers who gave of their time and energy, often in atrocious weather conditions – not uncommon in a part of Scotland noted for having the highest annual rainfall figures!

The main researchers, Sue and Fiona discovered documentary evidence showing that the site, located on the lower slopes of Creagan Sithe (Grid Ref. NN 275 015), referring to one “*Dugall McCoull*” in 1514

who pledged the land to “*Johne Mcfarlane of Araquhur*” by way of a wadset (old style mortgage) for the grand “*soum of fourty punnds*” (£40)!

Our own research reveals that the old settlement was probably a MacFarlane property, and being near to the western opening of Glen Douglas, they may have been descendants of Dougald MacFarlane, (brother of Andrew 10th Chief of Arrochar, circa 1488), who founded the MacFarlane branches of Tullachintaul, Glen Douglas, and of Finart and Gorton, all on Loch Long-side. When the MacFarlane estates were finally sold in 1784, we note that listed among the various properties was “*Muirlagan*”, as it was spelt then.

The reference to “*Dugall McCoull*” (means Dougal son of Dougal) tends to reinforce our belief that we are dealing with this branch of our Clan. We have the lineage of their chieftains dating from 1465 to the late 19th century, and we passed this data to Fiona and Sue, who kindly sent us photographs of



The Morlaggan volunteer workers.

the old documents for our own archives.

We have been told that any items of special clan interest discovered at the site will eventually become part of an exhibition and that a final report will be published.

Being thus a society dedicated to preserving the history and traditions of our Clan MacFarlane forebears,

who anciently held the lands in question, we shall do all we can to seek out as much information as possible concerning Morelaggan and, indeed, any other digs carried out about Loch Lomond and The Trossachs.

In ‘Lantern’ No. 111 (Sept. 2009), we reported on the archaeological dig being carried out at Ardess, a one time MacFarlane property at the foot of Ben Lomond, Buchanan parish, Stirlingshire ~ the work there was initiated by the National Trust for Scotland. We wrote to the Trust back in July last year, asking when a report is likely to be published ~ so far we have had no response, but we intend to pursue the matter. **Meanwhile, we must extend our grateful thanks to all those responsible for the Morlaggan Project: the Park Authority; and other experts ~but our special thanks go to Fiona, Sue and those intrepid volunteer workers.**