

The MacRuari emblem was the “Black Galley of the Isles” which was added by the MacLaren chiefs to the chevrons of Strathearn on their own shield. MacRory was obviously an important name in Clan MacLaren, and it seems likely that when Clan Ruari disintegrated as a result of devastating clan wars, at least some of the survivors transferred their allegiance to the Clan MacLaren.

Several MacRorys are listed in the Bond of 1573. The 1747 the Balquhiddier Baptism Registry lists the baptism of the child of a “MacLaren, alias MacRorie”- a perfect example of a double surname.

Wright and McIntyre

The Rental for Crown Lands for 1509 lists several McIntyres who were tenants at the western end of the Glen at Balquhiddier. McIntyre is a trade name derived from the Gaelic Mac an t Soir, or carpenter. Wright is the Anglicized version of the name. There is of course a Clan McIntyre, and it is possible that several members of this clan settled at Balquhiddier, but it is more likely that these McIntyres were MacLarens distinguished by their profession or trade. McIntyres or Wrights whose ancestry is traced to Balquhiddier are regarded as MacLarens.

Chief of Clan MacLaren

The current Chief of Clan MacLaren is Donald MacLaren of MacLaren. Donald, a member of the British Foreign Service, succeeded his father as Chief in 1966. Donald and Maida have five children, and when not on foreign assignment, live at Kirkton Farm in Balquhiddier. The farm property includes Creag an Tuirc, the hill overlooking the village. This was the ancient rallying point of the Clan.

CMSNA Genealogy Project

The Clan MacLaren Society of North America maintains an active Clan Genealogy Program dedicated to assembling a body of data for posterity on MacLaren families. This information is on repository in the Ellen Payne Odom library in Moultrie, GA. The repository is updated periodically as the dataset is expanded and revised.

The CMSNA Genealogy Project gives MacLarens a starting point in their own individual research, as well as a place to preserve the records of their own family histories. The records are such that individual records are combined with others in the goal of producing an overall record of the MacLaren Family.

The CMSNA Genealogist is:
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Eligibility for Membership

One automatically becomes a member of Clan MacLaren by birth, marriage, or adoption. Joining the CMSNA will enable you to fully participate in Clan activities and celebrations. To become a member, simply visit a CMSNA tent at one of the many Highland Games in the US and Canada, or contact the Membership Secretary:

Norman English
 P. O. Box 1583
 Silverton, OR 97381-0137
 (503) 874-8101
normengl@msn.com

Complete information about the Clan MacLaren Society of NA can be found at:

www.ClanMacLarenNA.org

Clan MacLaren Society Of North America



Clan MacLaren Names

MacLaren	McLaren	MacLaurin
McLaurin	MacLauren	McLauren
MacLarin	McClarín	MacLaran
McLaran	McClaran	MacLeran
MacLaurie	McLaurie	Laurence
Lawrence	Law	Lawson
Low	Lowe	Lawrie
Laurie	Lowery	Lowry
Patterson	Paterson	Peterson
MacPater	Patrick	MacPatrick
MacRory	McRory	MacGory
MacRuari	and other spelling variations	

Origin of Clan MacLaren

The MacLaren name was derived from Labhran (Laurin) of Ardveche, the hereditary Abbot of Achthus in Balquhiddier in the 13th Century. Major family groups include MacLaren, Law, Lowe, and Lowery, including all variant spellings.

MacLaren and MacLaurin

The various spellings of the name MacLaren derive their patronymic from Abbot Labhran, which was Anglicized, to Lawrence or Laurence. The name Lawrence was first recorded in Roman history, and was spread throughout the Roman Empire, eventually arriving in the British Isles. In approximately 500 AD Loarn or Laurin, a son of Erc, is reported to have acquired the lands of his father in what is currently known as Argyll. This is the first recorded instance of a name in this region of Scotland connected with the name Lawrence.

The use of Mac or Mc at the beginning of a name is used in Gaelic to denote “son of” or simply “of”. Less common forms are M’, V’, Na’ and B’. These prefixes were often or used infrequently or completely dropped by Scots. And it is only in relatively recent times that the widespread use of written records has caused an emphasis on standardized name spellings.

Law, Lawson, and Lawrence

From the discussion above, it can be seen how the surnames Law, Lawson, and particularly Lawrence are connected to the surname MacLaren. Law is a simple patronymic of Lawrence or Laurin. The name Lawson is a more complex patronymic, and it carries the same relationship to the surname MacLaren to depict “son of”. The suffix “son” may be derived from Scandinavian, Pict, or Viking origin. The term “son” is used throughout Scotland, and is sometimes referred to as a means for Anglicizing a Scottish name.

Anglicized clan names were frequently used as Highland Scots migrated from their traditional clan lands. Early Perthshire records show that Law,

Lawson, and Lawrence were in common use in the region. In the period 1500-1700 the names were found as far north as Inverness, and in the counties of Banff, Aberdeen, Kincardine, Angus, Fife, Sterling, and Kinross. In addition, the names were found in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and as far south as Ayr, Dumfries, and Berwick.

Lowery, Laurie, and Lowe

The prime origins of the names Lowry, Laurie, Lawry, or any of the other spellings appears to stem from the basic trend that most of the Indo-European languages share: ellipsis and foreshortening. Lowry is simply a truncation of the name (Mac)Laren by dropping the final “n”. This tendency toward ellipsis, or the dropping of the final sound of a word, is constant in the evolution of any language.

The Lowrys are heavily identified with the Scotch-Irish, and there is ample ground for speculation that several political factors at work in the 1600’s hastened the foreshortening of the name from MacLaren. By then, the fortunes of Clan MacLaren had been in decline for many years in the Balquhider homeland. When Ulster was opened to Scottish and English Protestants for plantation in 1609, settlers were not permitted from Scotland’s Western regions or Isles. A desire to obscure real or imagined ties with ineligible applicants may well have led to the intentional dropping of the “Mac” prefix and the shortening of the name.

In any event, by 1685 the Lowrys were present in what is now Northern Ireland in large numbers.

Septs of Clan MacLaren

A sept is a branch or division. In Scotland the term was originally used to identify a group affiliated with a particular clan and acknowledging the authority of the chief. The major septs of Clan MacLaren are Patterson, McRory, and Wright.

Patterson

The largest sept of Clan MacLaren is Patterson, which includes McFater, McFeat, and McPatrick. The earliest reference to a Patterson is to Duncan Patterson, who was implicated with other MacLarens in the murder of the Vicar of Balquhider in 1532. This individual may be Duncan, son of Patrick M’Ewyn V’Laurane who was mentioned in the Bond of manrent in 1559, but both Duncan and Patrick were favorite MacLaren names, so it is not possible to make a positive identification.

Pattersons are also identified to a lesser degree with other clans, primarily Lamont, Campbell, and McAulay, but the Pattersons from Balquhider and Strathearn belong to the MacLarens. Because the Pattersons arose all over Scotland, it is practically impossible to trace the origins of each individual. Owing to this, the Clan MacLaren welcomes all Pattersons.

MacRory

The second largest sept of Clan MacLaren is MacRory. Roderick, or Ruari, was an unusual name among the MacLarens, and was perhaps derived from a marriage with the famous Clan Ruari, the descendants of Ruari, second son of Sommerlied, the 12th Century progenitor of Clan Donald.