



MacAulays of Lewis

Source: <https://www.scotweb.co.uk/info/macaulay-of-lewis>

The MacAulays of Lewis were located on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. Until the seventeenth century Lewis was controlled by the Clan MacLeod of Lewis, together with the Morrisons of Lewis and the MacAulays of Lewis. The MacAulays lived in the area surrounding Uig on the western coast of Lewis, and had a deadly, long-standing feud with the Clan Morrison, whose lands were located north around Ness. The seventeenth century tradition gave them an Irish descent [current DNA backs this claim]. The MacAulays of Lewis were under the protection of the MacLeods of Lewis and left their legacy in the rich folklore of Lewis.

Origins

The surname MacAulay, when found in the Scottish Hebrides, is thought to be derived from the Gaelic Mac Amhlaobh or Mac Amhlaidh, Gaelic patronymic forms of the Old Norse personal name Áleifr and Óláfr, a common name among the Norsemen who settled in the Outer Hebrides.

Hebridean feuds

The most notable of the Lewis MacAulays was their hero Donald Cam MacAulay, who lived during the early seventeenth century, and appears frequently in Lewis lore. The Gaelic byname cam commonly means 'squinting' or 'blind in one eye'. Donald played a large part in the feuds with the Morrisons. When Morrisons invaded MacAulay territory and drove off cattle belonging to the MacAulays, Donald Cam and a force of MacAulays pursued the Morrisons across Loch Roag and in the night approached Dun Carloway. After killing



the sentry and with his men blocking any exit, "Donald Caum M'Cuil" scaled the walls of the broch. Once atop the tower Donald Cam ordered his men to gather large bundles of heather, which he threw into the dun and set alight, smothering and burning the Morrisons inside, thus destroying Dun Carloway.

There was a battle in which the MacAulays were massacred by the MacLeods, on the road between Stornoway and Uig. The only survivors of the MacAulays were the chief's youngest son Iain Ruadh (John Roy or Red John) and his illegitimate half brother, Iain Ruadh, the grandfather of Donald Cam MacAulay, placing this instance in the early sixteenth century.

