

Resource Pack

Can you complete the Clan Donald quest?

You may need to do a little extra research:

- Visit the SCRAN website www.scran.ac.uk and access the relevant records using the SCRAN ID numbers provided under each resource
- Visit [places of interest](#)
- Do your own research by following [links](#)
- Investigate the CD-ROM *The Scottish People 800-1450 – People of a kingdom*, Learning and Teaching Scotland, www.ltscotland.org.uk, email: enquiries@LTScotland.com, tel: Customer Services +44 (0)8700 100 297

Clan Donald

- Descended from Somerled, ‘King’ of the Isles
- Took their name from Somerled’s grandson Donald
- Ruled over an independent kingdom in the west up until the 15th century



Cross slab showing a member of the Clan Donald, 14th century.

SCRAN 000-100-043-502-C

Finding Facts

1. Who was the first ‘Lord of the Isles’?
2. Which member of the Clan Donald defeated King James I of Scotland at Inverlochy in 1431?
3. Where was the centre of power for the Lords of the Isles?

Looking at Evidence

4.



Study this family tree or 'bloodlines' of the Lords of the Isles.



This cross was found on Texa, near Islay, in the Inner Hebrides. It was raised in around 1380 to commemorate Reginald, son of John MacDonalld.

SCRAN 000-100-043-502-C

From the evidence given, work out which clan Reginald's mother was from. Which clan were the descendants of Reginald?

5.



This photograph shows the site of the medieval parliament of Tingwall in Shetland. A stone causeway linked the island to the shore.

SCRAN 000-000-000-487



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SCRAN 000-000-150-231-C

These photographs show *Eilean na Comhairle* and *Eilean Mor*, the council island and residence for the MacDonald Lords of the Isles at Finlaggan on Islay. A causeway linked the two islands.

Looking at the evidence what could you say about the leaders of Finlaggan and Shetland?

6.



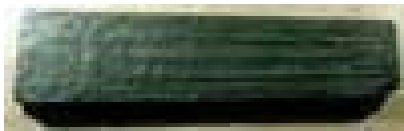
(a) This grave slab from Kildalton on Islay is from the 14th or 15th century.

SCRAN 000-000-034-690-C



(b) This is a cast of a stone grave slab from the 16th century from Finlaggan on Islay.

SCRAN 000-100-046-135-C



(c) This is a cast of a grave slab from the 14th or 15th century from Finlaggan on Islay.

SCRAN 000-100-046-129-C

Carved stone graveslabs like these are found throughout the Western Isles and the Highlands. They are examples of the Gaelic tradition of stone carving in Scotland. They were often commissioned as memorials to important people.

Look at the evidence. Considering the Gaelic tradition for symbolism, do these grave slabs tell us anything about the people they were carved for? What similarities can be seen?

Interpretation

7.



This is a cast of a stone from Finlaggan on Islay. It may be the footprint used in the inauguration ceremonies of new Lords of the Isles.

SCRAN 000-190-000-250-C

The inauguration of a new Lord of the Isles was a ceremony rich with tradition and symbolism. An account written in 1625 by Hugh MacDonald, historian of the Clan Donald, tells that the new Lord of the Isles would stand on a stone carved with a footprint.

(a) Why would a footprint be symbolic?

(b) Can you find another example of a ceremonial footprint? Think of Dunadd, stronghold of the Scots.

8. Strong artistic and cultural ties linked the west of Scotland and Ireland. The Lords of the Isles were closely related to the MacDonnell Lords of Antrim, from Ireland. They gave patronage to musicians, artists and poets on both sides of the sea. Other Gaelic chiefs also encouraged this distinctive tradition of art and song.

Do you think this culture of art and song is still as strong today? Why? You may wish to do your own research in this area. Look on the internet, how many links can you find to Gaelic singing groups, festivals, music and arts?

Links

<http://nms.ac.uk>

The National Museum of Scotland presents the history of Scotland – its land, its people and their achievements – through its rich collections built up over more than two centuries.

<http://www.scran.ac.uk/>

SCRAN is the award winning history and culture website providing instant access to images, sounds, movies and learning resources. It contains over one million records from museums, galleries and archives.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/scottishhistory/>

On this site you'll find in-depth articles, multimedia (like games, virtual tours and animations) as well as bite-size material like timelines and short biographies of historic figures. All is designed for you to get more out of your interest in History.

<http://www.nts.org.uk/>

This site contains useful information, whether you want to know more about the National Trust for Scotland's vital conservation work or are planning to visit some of the places of interest.

<http://www.ntseducation.org.uk/>

On this site there are sections which are intended to assist teachers with various topics in the school curriculum. They provide useful background material for teachers intending to explore these topics with their students.

<http://www.nationalgalleries.org/>

Education is at the heart of the work of the National Galleries of Scotland. Each of the Galleries provides a rich and lively learning resource. Our inclusive approach offers many different ways of learning to give everyone a chance to become actively engaged with art.

<http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk>

Historic Scotland safeguards the nation's built heritage and promotes its understanding and enjoyment. You can find information on more than 300 properties and scheduled ancient monuments. We also have resources for schools and details on technical conservation and research.

<http://www.nls.ac.uk>

The National Library of Scotland – Scotland's largest library and the world centre for the study of Scotland and the Scots. A vast reference library, covering all subjects, from art to mountaineering, and from early times to the digital age.

<http://www.nas.gov.uk>

The National Archives of Scotland (or NAS) is the main archive for sources of the history of Scotland as a separate kingdom, her role in the British Isles and the links between Scotland and many other countries over the centuries.

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk>

Learning and Teaching Scotland is a national public body sponsored by the Scottish Executive Education Department. The Scottish Executive has charged Learning and Teaching Scotland with providing advice, support, resources and staff development that enhance the quality of educational experiences with a view to improving attainment and achievement and promoting lifelong learning.

Email: enquiries@LTScotland.com

Telephone: Customer Services +44 (0)8700 100 297

Places of Interest

Finlaggan, Islay, Argyll

Answers

1. John of Islay, great-grandson of Donald
 2. Alexander, 3rd Lord of the Isles
 3. Finlaggan on Islay
4. The Clan MacRuari of Garmoran. Reginald's (or Ranald) family became the Clan Ranald.
5. There are obvious similarities between the meeting places of the councils of Finlaggan and the Norse community in Shetland. The Gaelic and Norse communities in Shetland and the Western Isles were very closely related in terms of organisation.
6. In the Gaelic tradition, carvings on grave slabs reflect something of the person they commemorate. Example (a) shows a man in armour with a sword – this may represent a warrior or powerful chief. Example (b) depicts a ship and the shaft of a sword. This may represent a sea-faring warrior. Example (c) is also carved with swords. Each of these examples includes the representation of warfare or strength – important to the culture that carved them.
7. (a) The footprint is perhaps symbolic of the next Lord following in the footsteps of his predecessor. It reinforces the strength and tradition of the title.
- (b) A similar footprint was used at Dunadd, power base of the Scots of Dalriada and also in the inauguration ceremonies of the O'Neill rulers of Tyrone in Ireland.
- [8. Personal research and findings.]