

# Ellan Vow Eilean A Vow



The castle at Island I Vow (Ellan Vhow / Eilean a Vow) was built in 1577 by the hero of the Battle of Langside, Andrew Macfarlane, the 14<sup>th</sup> Chief of the Clan Macfarlane. In honour of his contribution to this victory, Andrew was awarded the addition of the demi-savage and imperial crown to the Macfarlane armorial bearings and gave the clan its motto "This I'll Defend". Ellan Vhow was the seat of the clan after Inveruglas was burned by forces loyal to Cromwell in the mid 17th century and remained the seat through the end of the 17th century. The island was awarded to the early Macfarlanes in 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century charters as "Elanvow".



## The Ellan Vhow Preservation Fund

*The Ellan Vhow Preservation Fund* is a non-profit corporation dedicated solely to archaeological study, preservation and maintenance of the sixteenth century castle, buildings and site on Island I Vow (Ellan Vhow), Loch Lomond, Scotland. Please help us preserve this important site!

[EllanVhow.org](http://EllanVhow.org)  
[IslandIVow.org](http://IslandIVow.org)



# ELLAN VHOW

EILEAN A VOW, ELANVOW, ISLAND I VOW

CLAN MACFARLANE STRONGHOLD



On the island?  
See Catch & Release Artifacts!



TIMOTHY PONT'S MAP CA. 1590

July 2014

### Island I Vow

*Archaeology, History, Natural Heritage*

Scheduled Ancient Monument (11073)  
under the auspices of Historic Scotland.

Visited by King James VI

Seventeenth century seat of the  
Clan Macfarlane

Inspiration for William Wordsworth's  
The Brownie's Cell

# ELLAN VHOW

EILEAN A VOW, ELANVOW, ISLAND I VOW

## CLAN MACFARLANE STRONGHOLD

### Island stronghold of the Clan Macfarlane

EllanVhow.org  
IslandVow.org

### Preservation



Phase I



Phase II

Phase III



Phase IV

?  
Masonry Work  
Archaeological  
Excavation

- Two *Scheduled Monument Consents* (approvals) awarded to EVPF by Historic Scotland. Extension in progress.
- Phase I: Fallen Tree Removed (August 2012)
- Wildlife & Bat Survey completed (April 2013)
- Phase II: Preservation, Removed Elm, ivy, saplings from tower walls. (October 2013) and on-going
- Phase III: Recording: EDM and Topographic Standing Building Survey (October 2013 and on-going) **August 4, 2014!**

Eilean or Ellan translates in Gaelic as "Island". Experts interpret "Vow" to translate loosely to "mermaid or malicious water sprite" and associate this with dangerous submerged rocks or reefs. This seems consistent with the submerged bedrock at the south of the island. They also seem to agree that Eilean A Vow does *not* translate to "island of the cow" as some have speculated!

Ellan Vhow consists of a multi-story tower (the castle) at the south end of the island, five known side buildings, and an outer ring wall enclosing the stronghold. Tapered roofing slates found here suggest at least one taller conical tower. One building (2) faces east on a relatively high point and was possibly a chapel. Twenty-eight (28) archaeological features have been recorded on the island since 1995. Work continues thanks to our donors!



### The Brownie's Cell

Williams Wordsworth

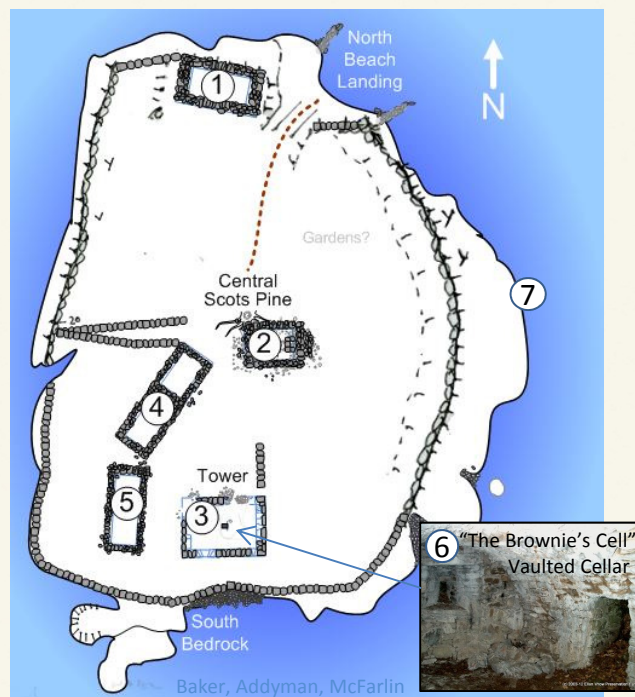
**MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND 1814**  
...SUGGESTED BY A BEAUTIFUL RUIN UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS OF LOCH LOMOND, A PLACE CHOSEN FOR THE RETREAT OF A SOLITARY INDIVIDUAL, FROM WHOM THIS HABITATION ACQUIRED THE NAME OF THE BROWNIE'S CELL.

I To barren heath, bleak moor, and quaking fen,  
Or depth of labyrinthine glen;  
Or into trackless forest set  
With trees, whose lofty umbrage met;  
World-wearied Men withdrew of yore;  
(Penance their trust, and prayer their store);  
And in the wilderness were bound  
To such apartments as they found,  
Or with a new ambition raised;  
That God might suitably be praised.

II High lodged the 'Warrior', like a bird of prey;  
Or where broad waters round him lay:  
But this wild Ruin is no ghost  
Of his devices--buried, lost!  
Within this little lonely isle  
There stood a consecrated Pile;  
Where tapers burned, and mass was sung,  
For them whose timid Spirits clung  
To mortal succour, though the tomb  
Had fixed, for ever fixed, their doom!

...  
IV Proud Remnant was he of a fearless Race,  
Who stood and flourished face to face  
With their perennial hills;--but Crime,  
Hastening the stern decrees of Time,  
Brought low a Power, which from its home  
Burst, when repose grew wearisome;  
And, taking impulse from the sword,  
And, mocking its own plighted word,  
Had found, in ravage widely dealt,  
Its warfare's bourn, its travel's belt!

...  
(See the full poem at [EllanVhow.org](http://EllanVhow.org))



### LEGEND

- 1- Stacked stone guard building near landing
- 2- Possible Chapel (?) facing Eastward.
- 3- Tower or Castle. Multi-story with intact cellar or "Dungeon"
- 4,5- Additional stacked stone buildings
- 6- Vaulted Cellar
- 7- Outer wall

