

Turnbull Clan Association

Crest Badge: A bull's head sable armed vert

Motto: Audaci Favet Fortuna (Fortune Favors the Bold)

The history of the Turnbolls has been closely interwoven with that of the Scottish/English Borders since they settled in the region as part of the Boernician race in 400 A.D. The Turnbolls are a scion of the Rule family of Roxburghshire where they lived on the lands through which flowed the River Rule in the parish of Hobkirk. Alan Rule was the first recorded Chief of the clan in 1214 followed by his son Richard in 1249.



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William de Rule became the first Turnbull when he saved the life of King Robert the Bruce at Stirling Park from a charging bull injured by the king while hunting. William, a large strong man, jumped in between the king and the angry bull, turning its head and breaking its neck. The gratified king dubbed his savior William Turn-E-Bull and gave him the barony of the Bedrule area.

The Turnbolls became a notorious Border Reiver clan seated at Bedrule Castle situated a few yards north east of the current Bedrule Kirk, at Fatlips Castle atop Minto Crags, and at Barnhill Castle at the base of the same crags. History records that the Turnbolls could quickly put 500 reivers into the saddle for one of their forays. In 1513, following success at Flodden, Lord Dacre led an English army of 5,400 north through the Rule Valley for further assault on a stricken nation. George Turnbull quickly rallied 700 Turnbolls, Kerrs, Douglases, and Scotts and defeated the invaders in the battle of Sclaterford.

When the crowns of Scotland and England became one under James VI of Scotland in 1603, many members of the Border Clans were dispersed to England, northern Ireland and the colonies. In Ireland the Turnbolls settled in county Donegal under the name Rule, in Antrim under the name Trimble and in Ulster under the name Turnbull. Amongst the first Turnbull pioneers to the Americas were Thomas and William Turnbull who settled in New Jersey in 1685; John in Annapolis, Maryland in 1753; William in Bonavista, Newfoundland in 1765; and William in St John's, Newfoundland in 1794. These pioneers became the nucleus of the first Turnbull settlements which spread from Nova Scotia through the Blue Ridge Mountains south to Florida and west to California.

The name Turnbull, occurs in many references throughout history and has been spelled Thrumbald, Thrumball, Tourneboeuf, Trambell, Tremblay, Tremble, Trembley, Trembley, Trimbil, Trimbill, Trimble, Trimbole, Trombe, Trombi, Trombil, Tromboul, Trumbald, Trumbel, Trumbil, Trumbly, Trumbo, Trumbold, Trumboli, Trumbul, Trumbulle, Trummell, Trunball, Trymbille, Trymbulle, Turnball, Turnbaugh, Turnbeaugh, Turnbell, Turnbill, Turnboll, Turnbough, Turnboul, Turnbow, Turnebu, Turnbull, and Turnebulle. The Rules are a sept of the Turnbull Clan and their name has been spelled De Rolle, De Rollo, De Rue, Regulus, Rewel, Rieul, Roall, Rollis, Rolous, Rool, Rouel, Rouley, Rouley, Roull, Rowell, Rowl, Rowle, Ruele, Ruhl, Ruhl, and Rule.