

hìghland family history society



HIGHLAND
FAMILY HISTORY
SOCIETY

comunn sloinntearachd na Gaidhealtachd

JOURNAL

Number 17

January 1986

ISSN 0262-6659

Published by

The Highland Family History Society

Comunn Sloinntearachd na Gaidhealtachd

Registered at the Post Office as a Newspaper

CONTENTS

Editorial p 1

Some Historical Associations of Badenoch p 2-12

Letters p 13-16

Clan History and the Genealogist [Part 2] p 17-21

Queries & Answers p 22-24

(c) 1986: Highland FHS and Contributors

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Chairman/ Librarian: Peter Reynolds, BA, ALA, Public Library, Farraline Park, Inverness.
- Secretary: Dr Frederick J. Glen, York Cottage, 1b Drummond Road, Inverness. Tel. (0463) 230052.
- Treasurer: Mrs Dorothy H. Booth, The Rigg, 46 Old Edinburgh Road, Inverness.
- Editor: Duncan R. Ross, 45 Glenurquhart Road, Inverness. Tel. (0463) 240080.
- Members: John Cousar; John H.R. Durham; Mrs Margaret Glen; Hamish D. MacLennan; Douglas R. Stewart.

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

The following publications are on sale at meetings, and are available by post from the Treasurer at the address above. Prices include postage.

- Highland FHS Journal, back numbers - £1.00 per issue
- Tombstone Inscriptions:
Geddes Churchyard, Nairnshire - £1.00 (£1.50 airmail)
- 1851 Census Index:
Kiltearn, Ross and Cromarty - £1.00 (£1.50 airmail)
- Introducing Scottish Genealogical Research, by Donald Whyte - £2.00 (£2.50 airmail)

The usual "NEWS" pages are absent from this number - nothing to do with current printing disputes, I hasten to add, but simply because your Editor cannot count. And since this issue is positively packed with interesting reading, I could not bring myself to leave anything else out. However, there have been one or two newsworthy developments I will mention here.

Ross and Cromarty District councillors have given a very enthusiastic reception to a suggestion that they set up a "Genealogy Centre" somewhere in the District. The idea comes from their recently appointed Museums Curator, Miss Leslie Jackson, who is soon to be based at Tain Museum - the council having stepped in to save it from probable closure. At this stage, the concept is no more than that, but councillors were convinced of its potential as a tourist attraction. Invergordon and Strathpeffer have been suggested as possible sites.

Co-incidentally, the M.P. for Ross, Cromarty & Skye, Mr Charles Kennedy, in a speech to the "Scots Circle" in London, had been calling for a network of such centres throughout the country, to enable Family History to be properly promoted by the Scottish Tourist Board.

Our friends in the Aberdeen & North-East F.H.S. now have a set of all the OPR microfiche indexes published so far for Scotland (these county indexes contain more information than the I.G.I.). They consist of baptisms and marriages for Shetland; Orkney; Caithness; Sutherland; Ross-shire; Inverness-shire; Nairnshire; Moray; Banffshire; Aberdeenshire; Kincardineshire; Aberdeen City (St Nicholas & Old Machar); Dundee City (Dundee, Monifieth, Mains & Strathmartine, Liff Benvie & Invergowrie); and Glasgow City (Glasgow High, bap. to 1757 only, mar. to 1764 only). They will acquire new indexes as they appear - next one due is Angus. For a small fee, they will accept enquiries from members of any FHS, and are willing to make print-outs from the fiche. Details of charges from: Mr & Mrs W.G. Diack, 87 Lee Crescent, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen AB2 8FH.

Moray District Council archivists, Dr David Iredale and Mr John Barrett have just produced a revised edition of Discovering Your Family Tree (Shire Publications, £1.50).

Finally, don't forget that our 5th Annual General Meeting (doesn't time fly!) takes place on March 25th, at

Some Historical Associations of Badenoch

By A.I.S. Macpherson

Alexander Macpherson in his Glimpses of Church & Social Life in the Highlands derives the name "Badenoch" from an old Gaelic word "Baide" meaning "marshy", and before embankments and drainage helped to control the Spey the dell-lands by that river, almost all the way from Laggan to Insh, must often have been flooded and always been wet. Nonetheless, the higher ground on either side was populated and cultivated and by reason of its central position, Badenoch has always been an important and strategic part of Gaelic Scotland. It was, in fact, the hub at which the passes through the mountains met. From the south there were the route by Garry, Druimachdar and Glentruim now followed by the main road and the railway; and the older one from Blair Atholl by Bruar, Gaig and Glentromie to Ruthven. From the west there were several routes, the most important ones being by Loch Laggan and Strathmashie to Laggan Bridge; by Glen Roy and Druimin to Garvamore, whence it was possible to continue either by Glen Markie to reach Strathdearn or Strathspey, or along the Spey to Cluny and beyond; and lastly from Gienmore and Lochaber over Corrieyarrack to Laggan and thence either along the Spey or by Glen Banchor. From the north-east it was easy to follow the Spey upstream, and from Inverness the direct route was via upper Strathdearn to the top of Glen Balloch, and so into Glen Banchor. The least accessible airt was the east, the Monadh Ruadh providing a formidable barrier penetrated only by the Lairig Ghru and Glen Feshie/Glen Geldie.

All these routes saw important traffic. For example, from Lochaber to Badenoch the Clan Mhuirich immigrated probably in the 13th & early 14th centuries, Clan Cameron came to fight at Invernahavan in 1386, and Argyll came to besiege Ruthven Castle in 1594. Mackintosh marched to Keppoch and to defeat and capture at Mulroy, the last clan battle in the Highlands, in 1688. Caterans from Lochaber in particular used the passes through Glenshiero, Glen Markie and the Dulnain to lift cattle from lower Badenoch and Strathspey, and later legitimate drovers took their cattle to market from the north-east through Glen Balloch, from the north-west by Corrieyarrack & Catlodge to Dalwhinnie, and out of Badenoch either by the Minigaig or Druimachdar. By the Minigaig there also came an important immigration of Campbells, Macgregors and Stewarts from the Slios Min, the north shore of Loch Rannoch, to Lynabiorag, Pitmean, Glengynack, Strone and Glentruim in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

The decision to open up the country and make the Highlands more accessible to governmental authority was taken after the Jacobite risings in 1715 and 1719. In charge of the construction of the new roads was General (later Field Marshall) George Wade, and his name is associated with three roads leading into or through Badenoch. The first, completed in 1728, ran from Dunkeld to Inverness through Druimachdar to Etteridge, thence straight to Ruthven, crossed the Spey to pass north of Lynchat, to Raitts, Lynuilig, Aviemore & Slochd. This road crossed the Spey close to Ruthven and did not come near the later sites of Newtonmore and Kingussie. The second road ran from Crieff through Aberfeldy (where Wade's splendid bridge over the Tay is still in use) to join his first road at the Inn at Dalnacardoch. It was completed in 1730. In 1731 the third road was opened from Dalwhinnie, by Catlodge, Garvamore, Druimin & Corrieyarrack to Fort Augustus. This was on the line of an old drove road but, ironically, its first major military exploitation was when Prince Charles Edward Stewart led his army over it, after he had raised his standard at Glenfinnan.

The first bridge across the Spey in Badenoch was built north of Ralia in 1770, and it was replaced by the present concrete structure about 1926. A new road was constructed on the north side of the Spey. It ran more or less in a straight line from the bridge through Culreach to Baile Nodha (New Town) where, close to the present golf club house there was an inn, then along Croit an Fraoch (where the 17th & 18th holes now are) past Tom Beiligin and through what is now Aultlarie arable to cross the Allt Larie low down and thence to the inn at Pitmean. Later it was pushed back to a firmer site and a bridge built across the burn. In the years 1810-15 the Commissioners of Highland Roads and Bridges constructed the "Fort William road", now called the "Laggan road". It was repeatedly held up because the costs were grossly underestimated, and the contractors went bankrupt (there is nothing new under the sun!), and was finally completed by Telford and the masons of the Caledonian Canal. It joined the north Speyside road at or near the inn at Baile Nodha, and a toll house was built. This is the first mention of what was to become Newtonmore. Development began about 1830 of the New Town on the moor (Baile Ur an t'Sleibh). The "moor" was in fact largely arable, and had three divisions. In the centre was the Moor of Clune (Sliabh na Cluanachd) extending from the Caochan an Staill (the Distillery Burn, where Old Glen Road now is) eastwards to the path along the east side of Loch na h'Irmich. Until the early 1900s practically the whole of the village was situated on this moor. East of it was the Moor of Strone (Sliabh Dubh), and west the Moor of Banchor. Previously the main habitations were the still existent crofts at Banchor, Clune, Craggan & Strone, and the now deserted townships in Glen Banchor, Bialidmore and Bialidbeg.

The next development in communications was the Highland Railway, opened through Badenoch in 1864 and leading over the next half century to great expansion of the tourist industry in Newtonmore and Kingussie, and to change in the character and distribution of the population. That this change was already occurring is indicated by Alan G. Macpherson's study of the parish of Laggan - between 1775 and 1855 he found that the proportion of Macphersons, for example, in that parish fell from nearly 40% to below 20% - but it was accelerated by the advent of the railway, and later by two world wars. The final development in communication has probably been the least beneficial to Badenoch and has produced conditions to which local communities have found difficulty in adjusting, namely the new A9, by-passing all the villages and townships on its headlong way from Perth to Inverness.

Before construction of the roads, the population was rural, mainly arranged in townships of two or three houses and crofts, often indicated by the Celtic prefix 'Bal' or the Pictish 'pit', usually with a mill serving a group of townships. For example, in Glen Banchor in the upper part where the Allt Madagan, Allt an Lochan Dubh and Allt Bheallach join to form the Calder, there are on the right bank Tullichiero - traditionally the first Macpherson settlement in Badenoch (by Kenneth, grandson of Muirich) - and on the left Dalnasealg, Dalanrigh and Dalbhealach. On the west bank of the Allt Fionndrigh, the next burn to join the Calder, was Baile Shuas or West Township, and on the east bank Baile Shios (East Township), Gorstan and Toroman; on the west bank of the Allt Chaoruinn was Dalchurn, and on the east Lurgan. Further down the glen were Luib and Baile Mhuilín (Milton of Glenbanchor) with mills at each site.

That movement took place from one holding to another, presumably as a better or bigger, or perhaps even a smaller tenancy, according to circumstances, fell vacant, is illustrated by my great-great-grandfather's family. His eldest son, my great-grandfather, was born in Dalanach in Glentruim in 1817; his second son was born two years later in Bialidmor; his third in 1825 at Dalchurn. A daughter was born at Lurgan in 1829, and the last two sons were born at Baile Shios in 1832 and 1836. Thus over a period of 20 years my great-great-grandfather occupied five different crofts, the last three admittedly adjoining one another, but we have no evidence that they were farmed as a unit.

Except for one house at Baile Shuas, all these crofts are now deserted, but the ones on the south-facing slope above the present village of Newtonmore are still being worked, viz Croftroy, Clune, Craggan & Strone.

Above Dalchurn and on the same west side of An Allt Chaoruinn, is a conical hillock with a flat top called Sithean Mor or Big Fairy Knoll.

This little plateau was the centre of merry-making in the days when Glen Banchor was tenanted, and doubtless was the site of religious observances earlier. After the glen became depopulated, a garden was created on the plateau by John Blair, the retired schoolmaster of Crubenmore and a much loved eccentric. The remnants of the garden were visible until World War II, and are still known as Johnny Blair's Garden. On the east bank of the Calder, where it debouches on to the valley, are the farmhouse of Banchor and the cemetery and site of the old chapel of St Bride, which are first mentioned along with the church in Kingussie in the 13th century.

At the access to the cemetery from the Laggan road is an iron signpost carrying the Gaelic inscription "An rathad daighnichte le lagh gu Cladh Brighde" - "The road affirmed by law to St Bride's cemetery." Thereby hangs a tale. In the 16th and much of the 17th centuries, Banchor was in the possession of the Mackintoshes, but in 1676 it was given to John Macpherson of Achacha in Raitts, and was held by his family until sold to James Macpherson of Balavil about 1791. The Macpherson family and their dependents were buried in St Bride's cemetery up to about 1853, but thereafter the burial ground was neglected and fell into disrepair. In the summer of 1865, William Cattanaich, a native of Badenoch but now a Baillie in Edinburgh, brought the remains of his mother from Drumguish for burial beside his father, who had died in 1842. When the large cortege of local men arrived at the road to the cemetery, which ran in a straight line with the road connecting the Perth-Inverness and the Laggan roads, he found that it had been built over by the new farm steading of Banchor and the churchyard park behind the steading was under cultivation. In the sight of the farmer, John Robertson (whose widow built the house I live in in Newtonmore), Cattanaich broke down the fence, took the funeral party through the growing oats, and completed the burial.

Subsequently Cattanaich raised an action in the Court of Session in Edinburgh against the farmer and the proprietor in respect of the right of way to the burial ground, and was successful. The Court, as expected, gave a new right of way which runs west of the farmhouse and is demarcated on either side by stones, most of which are still in position. After further successful litigation, William Cattanaich proceeded to remedy the disrepair of the graveyard, and in particular erected a strong retaining stone wall. The present kenspeckle condition of St Bride's cemetery is a worthy memorial to this public-spirited but now largely forgotten man.

Now lying in a crook of the River Calder, and between the Laggan road and the branch of the Perth-Inverness road which passes through Newtonmore and Kingussie, is the Eilean upon which Camanachd (Shinty) has been played since time immemorial.

It is so called because at one time it was an island, with the Calder dividing around it.

West of the Calder at the mouth of Glen Banchor stands Bialidmore - from "Beul", the Gaelic for a mouth - part of which and Dalchully in Laggan are probably the oldest inhabited houses in the district. About one mile west of Bialidmore is the burial ground called Cladh Pheadail - St Peter's - in which are buried many of the erstwhile dwellers in Ovie, Glentruim, Glen Banchor and Ralia, and beside it is a cottage now called Bialidbeg. Correctly this should be Balnacraig, lying as it does under the rock of Creag Dhubb, the township of Bialidbeg actually being situated between the road and the Spey. There is a ford across the Spey just below the long pool at Invertruim, used both by the burial parties coming to Cladh Pheadail, and as access to the peat hags between the Ordans. Almost where the rubbish dump now is was a building called Tigh na Moine (the house of the peats) where Cluny's peats were stacked and dried. Nearly opposite it on the north side of the Laggan road is a cup-shaped hollow called Lag an t'Saigairt - the priest's hollow - but nothing is known of how it got that name.

Across the Spey and just below the junction of Truim and Spey lies Invernahavan. In the 13th and 14th centuries this was the property of the Davidsons, along with Gallowie and Nuide. In 1386 Mackintosh intended to give Clan Cameron a lesson on the necessity of paying a rental on time for his lands in Lochaber, and called on his allies in the Clan Chattan confederacy to help him; but the Camerons got wind of this and forestalled him by making a foray in force into Badenoch. In making his dispositions to meet them, Mackintosh was persuaded by Davidson to give his clan the right of the line, on the ground that it was on their property that the battle was being fought. The Macphersons, as representatives of Old Clan Chattan, claimed that this was their right, and when their claim was refused they withdrew across the Spey and took no further part in the battle, in which the Camerons were unquestionably victorious. However on the following day, stung by a message carried under the customary safe-conduct by a herald and apparently from Clan Cameron but in fact sent by Mackintosh, accusing them of cowardice, the Macphersons fell on the Camerons as they were about to return home, and in a running battle which lasted from Dalanach in Glentruim to Loch Patag, inflicted heavy losses upon them. Understandably there ensued some bitterness between the Clan Davidson and the Clan Mhuirich, which culminated in the trial by combat between selected warriors of each Clan on the North Inch of Perth in 1396. There the Macphersons acquired the Feadan Dubh (Black Chanter) which is alleged to have fallen from heaven before the combat began.

But the losses on both sides were so severe that the Davidsons as a clan were broken and the power of the Clan Mhuirich in the Clan Chattan confederacy was notably reduced during the next 100 years or so. There is the tradition of another battle in which the Davidsons were involved at Gallowie close to Milton of Nuide, and there certainly are tumuli there which may represent graves, but when and against whom I have not been able to discover.

Two miles from Nuide, down the right bank of the Spey, is Ruthven, until the beginning of the 19th century virtually the only village in Badenoch and the only school of importance between Speymouth and Lorn. Here James Macpherson of Ossianic fame, and later of Balavil, was both a pupil and a teacher. Today Ruthven is represented by a farm and a picturesque ruin on a solid green mound overlooking the east bank of the Spey. There was a castle of Ruthven certainly as far back as the 13th century when the Comyns were lords of Badenoch. The power of the Comyns was broken by Robert the Bruce and lands in Badenoch were given by him to the Clan Mhuirich as a reward for their support. Bruce bestowed the lordship of Badenoch and the earldom of Moray on Thomas Randolph, and some 40 years later Robert II gave them to his fourth son, Alexander Stewart, Alasdair Mor Mac-an-Righ, better known as the Wolf of Badenoch. The castles of Ruthven, Lochindorb and Loch an Eilean were his principal strongholds from which he harried and terrorised the inhabitants of the then Province of Moray. He had frequent skirmishes with the Church and in particular with the Bishop of Moray who seems to have been a strongminded man and in fact excommunicated the Wolf after the Wolf had set fire to the cathedral and much of the town of Elgin. In his later years the Wolf appears to have had a sort of Pauline reformation and is in fact interred in Dunkeld Cathedral.

A castle on a site of such military importance as Ruthven was not likely to be left undisturbed for long and its subsequent history reflects particularly the fortunes of the Huntly family. At the height of their powers in the 16th century, George 4th Earl of Huntly was Lieutenant of the North and governed almost all mainland Scotland north of Perthshire. Inevitably such powers aroused the jealousy and suspicion of the Crown - at that time Mary, Queen of Scots. An expedition was sent against him and he was defeated, taken prisoner and died. Ruthven Castle was destroyed, but was rebuilt about 30 years later by the 6th Earl. Almost immediately it was besieged by Argyll, who had been appointed HM Lieutenant in north Scotland by James VI, because he saw it as a threat to his authority. The castle was stubbornly and successfully defended by the Macphersons and Argyll withdrew and was subsequently defeated at the battle of Glenlivet (1594), and had to retreat ignominiously without standard or baggage.

In 1647 Sir David Leslie captured the castle and Huntly disbanded his Badenoch forces, though it is noteworthy that "the hale of the men of Badenoch" were commanded by Ewen Macpherson of Cluny and highly commended for their conduct in Montrose's campaign. A military garrison (one company of foot) was stationed in the castle and in 1650 Gen. Monck made his HQ there. The castle was taken and finally destroyed by Macdonald of Keppoch fighting for Bonnie Dundee just before the battle of Killiecrankie (1689). In 1718 the ruined castle was replaced by a barracks which survived less than 30 years. In 1745 Sergt. Mulloy and a garrison of 14 men defended it against a somewhat desultory assault by a Jacobite detachment led by Sullivan and Gordon of Glenbucket, but in 1746 the barracks were captured and destroyed leaving the ruins which are visible and preserved today.

Two days after Culloden some 2000-3000 Highlanders assembled at Ruthven under Lord George Murray expecting to continue the campaign against the redcoats, but instead learned that Prince Charles had abandoned both his attempt to put his father on the throne and his supporters, with the message: "Let every man seek his own safety in the best way he can". Though there was intense military activity in Badenoch in the decade after Culloden the barracks were not rebuilt or occupied, and the search for Prince Charles and for Cluny was fruitless.

Hector Munro of Novar, and later James Wolfe (who subsequently won his battle and lost his life at Quebec), pursued the fugitives relentlessly and they had many hairsbreadth escapes, but thanks to the loyalty and vigilance of his clansmen Cluny's various hiding places were never discovered. Of these, the principal were the cave in the precipice on Creag Dhubb overlooking Lochan Ubhaid; an artificial cave dug out on the opposite bank of the Spey, discovered and therefore abandoned when a careless "Scalag" put his foot through the roof; the "cage" on Ben Alder which was constructed originally to shelter the wounded Lochell, Cluny's cousin, and not too kindly described by R. L. Stevenson in "Kidnapped"; and the cellar hole in Dalchully, an event commemorated by the Epergne in the Clan Macpherson museum. Hector Munro subsequently commanded the 89th Regiment in India in which many Badenoch men served, including Iain Dubh MacAlasdair, Balachroan, better known as Capt. John Macpherson, the Black Officer. When he retired from the Army he became recruiting officer in Badenoch, a post which inevitably led to unpopularity and suggestions that his methods of persuasion were not always strictly honourable. This, together with the fact that he was the most successful farmer in Badenoch, putting into practice what Brig. William Mackintosh of Borlum had enunciated in theory from his prison cell in Edinburgh Castle, and the grim ferocity of his sudden death in an avalanche while on a hunting expedition in Gaick on New Year's Day 1800, gained for him the reputation of being in league with the powers of darkness.

He also appears to have acted as a sort of land agent and it was quite largely through his offices that James Macpherson was able to acquire so much property when he settled in Balavil. The soubriquet "Black" seems to have related to Capt. John Macpherson's appearance, for he is said to have been dark and swarthy.

Immediately east of Balachroan and separated from it in the lower part by Caochan Mhannich - the Monk's burn - is Pitmean, properly spelt Pitmean, the middle township. Here there was an inn with a high reputation not only as a staging post for travellers on the road on the north side of the Spey, but also for balls and dinners. The famous party to celebrate the return of the Cluny property to Duncan of the Kiln, the son of Ewen of the '45, was held in the inn at Pitmean. Westwards across the Allt Larie is a ridge known as An Cnoc Mor on the highest point of which is Ard na Coille (the height of the wood). North of the ridge is the estate of Strone, which in Gaelic means a nose, and is so called from the bluff or promontory which overlooks the Allt Larie, and south of it the farm of Alltlarie, and also the hillock known as Tom na Croich (Gallows Hill). Much earlier than this sinister function, however, it must have been a religious and probably a judicial centre, for there is a very ancient stone circle there with two concentric rings. In the neighbourhood, also, there was found about 100 years ago a hoard of silver coins, and on the adjoining ridge there was a number of what appear to be prehistoric burial sites.

Some five miles west of Newtonmore lies Cluny Castle, on raised ground looking south across the Spey. The history of the House of Cluny would require at least one lecture in itself. In the present context, suffice it to say that the lands of Cluny appear to have come into Macpherson hands by marriage about 1430, and it remained the home of the chiefs of the Clan Mhuirich and the centre around which the fortunes of the Clan revolved, for five centuries. Cluny itself was held in kindly tenancy from the Lordship of Badenoch until 1680, when a full title was obtained, the Gordons receiving in exchange the property of Grange in Banffshire. In spite of the fact that Ewen Ruadh, who led the Clan with great gallantry in "the Forty-Five", did not succeed his father until July 1746, his new house of Cluny was burned in June 1746. The estates were forfeited and were not restored to his son, Colonel Duncan Macpherson (Duncan of the Kiln, so-called because of the place of his birth in 1746), until 1784 and then only on payment of a fine. James Macpherson, later of Balavil, was largely instrumental in securing this restoration, greatly to his credit as the estates were first offered to himself. Duncan did not marry until 1798 and possibly because the birth of an heir male was delayed, executed an elaborate and rigorous deed of entail, which his son Ewen (born in 1804 and now commonly known in the district as 'Old Cluny') found difficult and costly to reduce.

Indeed, according to Fraser-Mackintosh the cost of the proceedings was the foundation of the debt necessitating the sale of Ardverrick and Ben Alder in the mid-19th century, and eventually to the sale of Cluny Castle itself in 1942. The present Chief, Sir William Alan Macpherson of Cluny and Blairgowrie, has the distinction of being the first clan chief to sit upon the bench of the High Court in England. As it happened, his introduction and that of my young brother to the office of High Sheriff of Greater London, took place on successive days - a sequence which caused the Lord Chancellor to ask if there was to be a take-over of the law in England by the Clan Macpherson.

Across the Spey and almost opposite Cluny Castle is the farm of Breakachy (the brindled field), now part of Glentruim. The Macphersons of Breakachy have an unusual family story. Donald Macpherson was brother-in-law to Cluny of the Forty-Five and was his constant companion in the difficult times after Culloden. Indeed it is probably not too much to say that Ewen Ruadh (of Cluny) owed his safety and such comfort as he was able to enjoy, largely to the fidelity and resourcefulness of Donald of Breakachy. Donald was the father of Colonel Duncan Macpherson of Bleaton in Glenshee (the family having quitted Breakachy in 1777) and the cousin of Soirle (Samuel) Macpherson, who was a Corporal in Major Grant's company of Lord Sempill's Highland regiment (the Black Watch). Many men from Badenoch joined this regiment when it was raised, believing that it was recruited to preserve peace in the Highlands and that their terms of enlistment did not include service overseas.

Consequently when, in 1743, they were marched to London ostensibly to be reviewed by the King, but in fact to join the British forces serving in Germany, many of the men considered they had been deceived and cheated, and determined to make their way back to Scotland. The leaders of this party of about 100 men, 15 of whom were Macphersons, were Corporals Samuel and Malcolm Macpherson, both of the family of Breakachy, and Private Shaw from upper Strathspey. Travelling by night on by-roads and holing up by day, they reached as far as the borders of Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire before they were induced to surrender, again believing that pardon had been offered. But the three leaders were court-martialed and shot, and many of the others transported. On the Clan Macpherson the whole episode made an indelible impression of betrayal by and distrust in the Government, and undoubtedly influenced their decision to throw in their lot with the Jacobites two years later. Samuel's brother was Kenneth Macpherson, who gave long and distinguished service to the Honourable East India Company and finished his military career as a General, and his great-nephew (Bleaton's son and grandson of Ewen Ruadh) was General Robert Barclay Macpherson whose record of service in the East and West Indies, the Peninsular War, and North and South America, is a tribute as much to his stamina and constitution as to his gallantry.

Southwards over the hill and in Glentruim are the old townships of Pressmuckerach and Dalanach. The former was used as a staging post by Dundee in his march from Lochaber to Killiecrankie (one of his letters to Cluny urging his adherence is addressed from there), and both were farmed by my great-great-grandfather when he migrated from Lerigan in Rannoch to Badenoch. His eldest daughter, Ann, married my great-great-grandfather, and one of her younger brothers was Donald Phail nan Oran, Donald of the Songs. His best known poem is the emigrant's song "Gu'm a Slan do na Fearaidh Theid Thairis a Chuan", written before the great emigration from Badenoch in 1838, the good ship "St. George" taking five months to reach the promised land in Australia.

All that is left of the once flourishing village of Ralia (the grey flat place) is part of the old farmhouse. After the Spey was bridged in 1770, the school at Ralia drew its pupils from a wide circle including Pressmuckerach in Glentruim, Ovie, Bialid, Glenbanchor and Nuide. The last tacksman of Ralia, Lachlan Macpherson, helped to administer the Cluny estate after its restoration in 1784 and was a man of great influence and much respected in the district. He had other memorable claims. He lived to the age of 87, married when he was 53 Grace, the daughter of Andrew Macpherson of Banchor, and during a married life of 14 years sired 11 children. Of these, only two married; Duncan who became a Major in the 42nd regiment and retired to Inverness to become a collector of customs, and Ewan who, after service with the Madras Native Infantry from which he retired also with the rank of Major, bought the estate of Glentruim and was the direct ancestor of the present laird.

Three other members of the family deserve special mention. Two daughters, Charlotte and Jane, lost their lives tragically when their home at Falls of Truim was destroyed by fire. A third son, James, became Colonel of the Ceylon Rifles, but is remembered particularly for a deed of great gallantry when he was a Lieutenant in the 45th regiment. At the siege of Badajoz (1812) during the Peninsular War, he was first up one of the three scaling ladders and was shot at point-blank range, but the ball hit a silver button on his tunic and he escaped serious injury. However, the ladder broke and he fell to the ground. By the time he recovered consciousness the walls had been gained. He again mounted a ladder and dashed through the hand-to-hand melee towards the tower where the French flag was flying. He disarmed and captured the sentry and, reaching the top of the tower, tore down the French colours and then "for lack of anything else took off his red jacket and hoisted it on the staff as an honourable substitute for the British flag". Next day he took the flag to his divisional commander, Gen. Picton, and at his insistence to the Commander-in-Chief, the Duke of Wellington. Though seriously wounded at Orthes in 1813, he recovered and was taken personally by Gen. Picton to the Duke of York, who promoted him Captain.

To have attempted to deal comprehensively with the historical associations of Badenoch within the compass of this short paper would have been a self-defeating exercise. Therefore I have confined my subject to an area about 10 miles in diameter in upper Badenoch, with which I am particularly familiar and in which my family has been rooted for three recorded centuries, and probably for a long time before that. One of my main sources has been my father, the late Sir Stewart Macpherson, whose great local knowledge he passed on both orally and in many written contributions chiefly to the Badenoch Record in the years 1936-48, though often these were anonymous.

REFERENCES

- Macpherson, Alexander: Glimpses of Church & Social Life in the Highlands, 1893, Blackwood, Edinburgh.
- Macpherson, Alan G.: An Old Highland Parish Register - Survivals of Clanship & Social Change in Laggan, Inverness-shire 1775-1854. Scottish Studies Vols 11 & 12, 1967 & 1968.
- T.S.M.: passim Badenoch Record, Kingussie, 1936-48.

- - - - - o o - - - - -

THOUGHTS FOR BEGINNERS

A rose by any other name may smell as sweet, but an ancestor by any other name could turn out to be a complete stranger! In Scotland, the system of naming children appears to have been pretty consistent until early this century. In my own family, the same names have repeated every second generation for nearly two centuries, and each new name introduced has a logical background. This ended in the early 1930s, when my youngest brother and sister received names I have wondered about ever since! Now, if I find, say, a Peter among a host of Alexs, Hughs and Johns - even if the period is right, and his parents have the relevant names - he is put aside until a more definite link is found. If Scotland is fortunate in its system of naming, it is unfortunate in the plurality of people bearing the same name, particularly in Highland districts where by-names are used to distinguish one from the other. Also, as an illegitimate child has no right to his/her father's name without his consent, this can lead to confusion if this fact is not known.

KENNETH ROSS

LETTERS

SIR - I should like to add a few words about researching at New Register House, arising from Mr Stewart's interesting article in Issue 15 of the Journal [July '85].

I too had an opportunity to spend a short time at NRH in May, and wanted to use the time to try and trace my grandfather, Hugh Ross William MacKenzie, who was born at Fearn, Ross-shire, at about the time registration started in Scotland. Although I, too, arrived well before 9.30, there was already a queue of about 15 ahead of me, a couple of whom did not speed matters along, as they had lengthy discussions with the only clerk dealing with admission and payment of fees, as to whether a daily or weekly fee would be preferable.

However, once past this hurdle, all went well. My interest was mainly in the Search Room to examine census returns, OPRs, and the Register of Neglected Entries. I had written ahead to reserve a seat. This is essential, as there is only a limited number of microfilm viewers and most people, once in place, stay all day. The staff were extremely helpful, and I was successful in finding my grandfather, his mother and step-sister in the 1861 census for Fearn. This, of course, gave place of birth, and enabled me subsequently to find my great-grandmother, Ellen Ross, in the 1841 census for Rosskeen, which was not an area I had previously considered, as I knew of no family connection.

I had to leave at 2.30, but was very satisfied with the result of my searches. One distinct advantage for researchers at NRH over those at St Catherine's House in London, is that one can see and copy from the original certificates. At St Catherine's House an application for a copy (and payment) has to be made merely on the basis of an entry in the index, which may in fact lead to the wrong person, as I have discovered to my cost in the past! Of course, one does not pay to see the indexes. Also, any errors in transcription at NRH are one's own. After searching fruitlessly over a long period for the name "Gursole", given on a copy marriage certificate from St Catherine's House, I finally queried the transcription, and it was confirmed that the name should in fact have been "Yendole".

I failed to find any trace of the birth of my grandfather, either in the indexes or in the Old Parish Registers, and I wonder if it is known to what extent the new requirement to register births in 1855 was complied with, particularly in more remote areas?

2 Ridge Acre,
Derwen Fawr,
Swansea SA2 8AP.

Mrs ANGELA EVANS

SIR - I thought members might be interested to know I have recently transcribed all FRASER and MacBAIN inscriptions in Daviot, Dunlichity, Jores and part of Moy burial grounds. These are a fairly high proportion of total inscriptions, numbering over 200 stones. Modern cemetery extensions have been omitted. I intend to complete Moy, and add Boleskine. I have indexed Frasers and MacBains recorded, and also places mentioned. I would be pleased to respond to anyone who has any interest in this information. ... I shall, of course, let the Society have a copy of my transcriptions, once typed and the survey completed. I was surprised to find that there was no evidence of previous reading of the older stones in these churchyards.

SIMON FRASER
 Balvraid,
 24 Blarmachfoldach,
 Fort William PH33 6SZ.

* * * * *

SIR - ... We have got a lot of information on the GILSON family, and would be quite pleased to help in any way with any name in Caithness. ... My husband's family have been in Caithness a long time, so we have traced a lot of them. Let me know if I can be of any help. I don't want payment, except that the Registrar charges now.

Mrs MARY GILSON
 No. 4 Skaill,
 Dounreay, Thurso,
 Caithness.

* * * * *

SIR - In the October issue of the Journal [No 16] you ask for "B & B" among the members. We do a reasonably high quality "B & B" from March to October, at a standard price. We are also members of the Inverness Tourist Board. We shall be delighted to accommodate overseas members, and venture to suggest that booking ahead in the high season is preferable, although not always essential.

BRUCE SIMPSON
 Woodend House,
 Dalcross,
 Inverness.
 Tel. Croy (06678) 234.

* * * * *

SIR - I wish to report the satisfying results of my ads in the Highland FHS Journal [Query 13/15, Jan. '85] and the "Inverness Courier". Through the Journal, I began a correspondence with a delightful member from Edinburgh, who already had considerable information, and who offered to do further research for me (with pay of course) at the Register House. She has done a family tree of all the Nobles in the Moy and surrounding parishes that extends fully 6ft! She has even checked gravestones in six graveyards! Through the "Courier" ad, I had seven replies varying from Beauty-Forres-Edinburgh, and have "met" a cousin from Edinburgh who has sent me 10 snapshots of the original family homestead. Only last week I heard from another cousin who lives in Inverness and has invited us to call. I am extremely gratified and excited at the prospect of meeting a genuine Scottish relative! This is the culmination of years of search.

Mrs PRISCILLA NOBLE BRENNAN
 1052 Sunnybrook Drive,
 Lafayette, California 94549,
 U.S.A.

* * * * *

SIR - I have in my possession a considerable number of portrait postcards dating from the First World War. Regrettably, the vast majority give no indication of identity. However, a few do contain some information and if any members recognise any of the following, perhaps they would like to get in touch with me.

- 1) Name on back: Billy Webster, 4 Stafford St., Aberdeen. Picture shows small boy (aged 2 ?) wearing sailor's dress. Circa 1914.
- 2) Name on back: Miss Ena Hardie, 257 Gt. Northern Road, Aberdeen. Picture shows head and shoulders of young woman. Circa 1914.
- 3) Name on back: Miss Barrie Duncan, 38 Gladstone Place, Woodside, Aberdeen. Picture shows full-length portrait of young woman. Circa 1914.
- 4) Name on back: Miss A. Stott, Don Street, Woodside, Aberdeen. Picture shows young woman seated. Circa 1914.

Members may also be interested to know that I hold a quantity of topographical postcards of Britain, dating from the beginning of the century.

R.A. MUNRO
 3 Colburn Road,
 Broadstairs,
 Kent CT10 1SE.

* * * * *

Clan History and the Genealogist

By R.W. Munro

PART TWO: Clan Genealogies

SIR - ... The Query [14/6, April '85] was worth its weight in gold. I can't believe how well I've done because of it. Answers came from: Denis Cameron of New Zealand, who is related to me, way back, and who sent a full family history - much of it from the published Cameron History by Stewart of Ardvorlich, which I didn't know existed; Mrs Loraine MacLean, who cleared up some points and gave me more information, because she's been researching Erracht Camerons who are probably the family from which the Clunes Camerons are descended; and Mr John Grant (Hants) who first of all tried to assist on the Camerons, and I answered his letter explaining I had joined Clan Grant Society and was about to write to him about that. His second letter was a history lesson and full family tree for my Grant forebears - the Glenmoriston, Dundreggan, Sheuglie, etc families. It has been a most exciting time, receiving all these very informative letters which are beautifully written and so enjoyable to read, even if they had not been so helpful. So this first year with the H.F.H.S. has been most profitable. Your Journals continue to be excellent and I am very pleased. ...

MARY DAVIDSON

347 Roland Road,
R.R.#1 Fulford Harbour,
British Columbia V0S 1C0,
Canada.

* * * * *

SIR - ... The Journals are most interesting. We watch them closely for any reference to MackKays who emigrated from Sutherlandshire to Nova Scotia or Ontario ("Canada West" or "Upper Canada"), especially in the period c.1800-1830. We would be happy to pass on requests for information on descendants of our "first-comers". Thank you for all the interest you provide!

ELIZABETH N. MACKAY, M.D., C.M.

44 Jackes Avenue,
Apt 2308,
Toronto, Ontario,
Canada M4T 1E5.

* * * * *

[Well Done, That Postie! Dorothy Booth safely received a letter recently, addressed as follows:- "To The Lady who has collected & written names of Nairnshire families, Old Edinburgh Rd., Inverness." Such is fame.]

It has often intrigued me to think of the galaxy of writers on Highland historical subjects who walked the streets of Inverness in the '80s and '90s of last century. I wonder whether the names of the lawyer Dr. William Mackay, Charles Fraser-Mackintosh M.P., schoolmaster Alexander Macbain, and the journalist and publisher Alexander Mackenzie, are as well-known today in the Highland capital as they were 100 years ago? Their work is certainly not forgotten -- Urganhart and Glenmoriston, Invernessiana, Inverness Personal and Surnames, The Prophecies of the Brahan Seer, and many others -- even if, in some respects, they have been overtaken by later research and different ways of historical writing. In their days, too, great issues were in the Highland air, with the 'crofters war' and demands for land reform at the top of the list, and these men of letters were also found in the forefront of the controversy.

Around Inverness, at the same period, on the one side a retired civil servant (GPO) in Nairn was immersed in the history of the Mackintoshes and Clan Chattan, while on the other the ministers of Killearnan and Kiltarlity were deep in the study of the great Clan Donald. Meantime, particularly in the south of Scotland, where many Gaels were gathered, the clan society movement had taken a grip on people's imagination, and hardly a year of the 1880s and 1890s passed without new ones springing up. There was a great demand for information about the clans, especially perhaps among those who were in danger of losing their roots.

Much had been written about the clans in the aftermath of the 'tartan extravaganza' associated with George IV's visit to Edinburgh in 1822. John Anderson, M.S., who if I'm not mistaken was one of a prominent Inverness family, wrote a well-researched book on Fraser genealogy (in which he had been professionally involved), and also a series of short articles on other clans in the Courier of the 1820's; Stewart of Garth's Sketches of the Highlanders, James Logan's Scottish Gael, and the Sobieski brothers followed, making the reading public aware in more detail of a way of life in which Sir Walter Scott and Queen Victoria, in their different way, had stimulated an interest. But I don't think it would be too much to claim that it was this group of writers based on Inverness, and one of them in particular, who gave such studies a genealogical dimension, and established (if they or he did not actually invent) a school of 'genealogical clan history' which has not lost its appeal in the century or so that has passed since they wrote.

