

# híghland family history society



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## A 'WARES' REUNION - By A.G.W. Lamont

George Wares, crofter-fisherman, and his wife Catherine Wright, were born in the 1790s and lived out their lives in Canisbay, Caithness.

This note concerns a gathering of 12 of their descendants, at the North British Hotel, Edinburgh, for a Wares Reunion Dinner. With spouses and friends, the company totalled 20. Many had never met before, but all found pleasure in old and new acquaintances.

Wares is distinctly a Caithness name in origin - until 150 years ago almost always WARSE or WARRS, but now almost always WARES. George was baptised the one way, and died the other, but there is a Hill of Warse near Canisbay. In old records there is frequent reference to Martin Groot of Warse, and one can suspect that the preposition was dropped in due course. I have heard an elderly aunt say, in fact, that "the Wares owned all of John O'Groats at one time". Whether true, someone else will have to determine. Perhaps Warse in Canisbay has the same meaning and origin as Wards in the Orkneys - there are numerous Hills of Wards there.

Clara Cormack, one of the descendants of George and Catherine, has written:- "They had little, asked for nothing from anyone, and we should be proud of them as forebears." So we should - the land is not an easy one from which to wrest a living, and the coast and waters of the Pentland Firth are daunting for a small-boat fisherman. Clara has also written that early in this century she "saw the crofters come in to the shop, exchange their eggs for tea and sugar, about the only things they needed to buy. They kept a very few cows, and sold a calf or two for money to buy clothes and shoes. Otherwise, they lived off the croft - oatmeal, beremeal, fish from the sea, kept the odd pig and salted or hung the bacon. Money hardly came into their lives - it was exchange, or the few pounds from the calf. Much of their clothes came from their own sheep."

The 20 people at the function, some my first cousins, and some more distant, came there as a result of my poking around in the past, looking for descendants of George and Catherine. In searching out my mother's forebears, New Register House was, of course, a great help, leading me rapidly to her grandparents, Morison Wares and Isabella McDonald, but there I stuck.

Morison was said by the living to have come from Canisbay, but no census record confirmed it. By hunch one day I thought he might have got to Wick by 1851. Indeed he had! There he was, living with his maiden aunt, Janet Wright, on the same street as the Pulteneytown Distillery, and apprenticed cooper at 14 years of age. Perhaps his casks were for fish, not Scotch. The number given in the Census for Janet's address is 107, but no number higher than 65 is to be seen today. Who knows why? Somehow, Morison changed course and became a bootmaker, one of around 30,000 individual boot and shoe makers in Scotland last century. He was a maker of heavy, long-lasting farm boots, a master who made only and repaired never. His wife's cousin, John McDonald of Balquhidhar was the same.

Four of the party were grand-daughters of another of the George and Catherine children, Elizabeth. A much-loved lady, wife to Alexander Begg of Canisbay, her memorial stone is to be seen today near the north-east corner of the beautiful Canisbay church. But how did I come to know of Elizabeth's people?

One time in Glasgow, I used the telephone directory, whereupon, finding a few Wares, I called one. Two days later, following a suggestion made during that call, I met David Wares in Newcastle, England. He turned out to be my mother's first cousin, about whom I had never heard. From David, and from correspondence that then developed, the whole family connection soon appeared. Three generations are set out below, and the remainder, up to people born in 1984, is in the hands of the Highland Family History Society in Inverness. I hope it will be useful to others. One result of producing it came to some fruit a few years ago. On an extensive tour through Scotland, we had the great pleasure in Thurso, in Oban, in Portree, to visit other descendants of George and Catherine, to hear their stories, to enjoy their company, to learn of extensive connections with other Caithness names - Dunnet, Begg, Sinclair, Brotchie, Mowat, Manson, etc. - and to see some of the places they belonged to.

Of Wares descent at the Reunion, there were Dorothy Hall, Nina Watson, Elma Hannaford, May Walker, Janet Watson, Janet Douglas, Stuart Walker, David Wares, Lexie Paterson, Elizabeth Rice, Helen Bolt, Elizabeth Dunnet, and me [Archibald George Wares Lamont, 19 Hill Street, Box 2489, Picton, Ontario, Canada K0K2T0].

For much of the information in the following list of descendants, I am much indebted to David, Lexie, the two Elizabeths, and to Clara Dunnet (Mrs Stanley Cormack) of Kirkcudbright.

1. George WARES [1], fisherman-crofter in the Parish of Canisbay, Caithness, was born 1792, Jan. 1, son probably of William WARES and Margaret MOWAT. In 1822, Dec. 7, he was married to Catherine (or Kaithren) WRIGHT. Catherine was born in Gills, Canisbay, to John WRIGHT and Barbara HARRROW, in 1798, Jan. 20. Catherine outlived George, dying a widow in 1883, Mar. 30, in Gills. The children of George and Catherine were born and brought up at Rigifa, a bleak spot in the peat bog, in a house that had fallen to ruin in the early years of this century.
  - + 2. Barbara, chr. 1823, Oct. 23. Married Alexander GIBSON.
  - + 3. William, chr. 1827, Dec. 29. Married Margaret BROTCHE.
  - + 4. Elizabeth, b. 1829, Dec. 2. Married Alexander BEGG.
  - + 5. Isobel, b. 1832, Oct. 13. Married John MANSON.
  - + 6. Frances, b. 1834, Nov. 15. Married John SERVICE.
  - + 7. Morison, b. 1836, Feb 2. Married Isabella McDONALD.
  8. Catherine, chr. 1839, Apr. 2. Married John SWANSON.
2. Barbara WARES [2], chr. 1823, and married Alexander GIBSON at Canisbay in 1857, May 29.
  9. Katie GIBSON, twin to:
  10. Annie GIBSON.
3. William WARES [2], chr. 1827, and married Margaret BROTCHE in 1863, June 11. George, b. 1868 at Canisbay.
  12. William, b. 1870, Jan. 9, at Canisbay.
  13. John.
  14. Jeannie.
4. Elizabeth WARES [2], b. 1829, and married Alexander BEGG at Canisbay in 1856, June 6. Alexander was born 1823, and died in 1874, leaving Elizabeth with a family of eight. The children were born at Gills. The eldest, Alexander, ran the farm and a general store at Gills. Elizabeth was clearly a well-loved person. Though she died in 1903, Dec. 10, her memory runs clear in some of her descendants, who still maintain the gravestone for her and Alexander as one of the best-kept stones in the Canisbay churchyard.
  15. Alexander BEGG, b. 1858, d. 1923, Apr. 13. Unmarried.
  16. George BEGG, b. 1859?, d. 1928 in Johannesburg. Unmarried.
  - + 17. Robert BEGG, b. 1860. Married Helen SHEARER.
  - + 18. Catherine Wright BEGG, b. 1862. Married Malcolm McDONALD.

39. Hector McDONALD. Unmarried.
40. William Ewart McDONALD.
41. Ronald McDONALD.
42. Annie Christina Henrietta McDONALD. Died 1932.
19. Christina BEGG [3], b. 1863, and married William LOWDEN.
43. Elizabeth Wares LOWDEN. Married Peter LINN.
44. Christina LOWDEN. Married Thomas STEWART.
45. William LOWDEN. Unmarried.
46. John LOWDEN. Unmarried.
20. Elizabeth BEGG [3], b. 1865, and married John GRAY of Renfrew. Elizabeth died 1959.
47. John McKay GRAY. Married Margaret UNDERHILL.
48. Alexander GRAY. Married Mary ?
49. Elizabeth Wares GRAY, b. 1900. Married Victor RICE at Renfrew.
50. Alexandrina Keith GRAY, b. 1903. Married Wm. PATERSON at Renfrew.
51. Helen GRAY, b. 1910. Married Robert BOLT.
21. Margaret BEGG [3], b. 1869, and married David DUNNET in 1900. Margaret died in 1952.
52. John Alexander Begg DUNNET, b. 1901, d. 1943.
53. Elizabeth Wares DUNNET, b. 1903 at Ralston, Paisley.
54. Clara Davidson DUNNET, b. 1908. Married Stanley CORMACK 1937.
22. Isabella BEGG [3], b. ?, and married George SINCLAIR. Isabella died in 1904, only a year after the birth of her daughter. George was a farmer at Dounreay, and never remarried.
55. Elizabeth Wares SINCLAIR, b. 1903. Married George BEGG.
23. John MANSON, MARRIED Elizabeth ?
56. John MANSON.
24. Isabella MANSON, married John DEAS.
57. David DEAS.
58. Samuel DEAS, twin to:
59. Albert DEAS.
60. Isabella Wares DEAS.
61. Peter DEAS.
62. Thomas DEAS, twin to:
63. George DEAS.
- + 19. Christina BEGG, b. 1863. Married William LOWDEN.
- + 20. Elizabeth Begg, b. 1865. Married John GRAY.
- + 21. Margaret BEGG, b. 1869. Married David DUNNET.
- + 22. Isabella BEGG, b. ? . Married George SINCLAIR.
5. Isobel WARES [2], b. 1832, and married John MANSON at Wick, in 1863.
- + 23. John MANSON. Married Elizabeth ?
- + 24. Isabella MANSON. Married John DEAS.
6. Frances WARES [2], b. 1834, and married John SERVICE. The Services had a croft on the hill at Gills well into the 1900s.
25. George SERVICE. Died in Australia in 1963.
7. Morison WARES [2], b. 1836, and married Isabella McDONALD in Edinburgh in 1861, July 19. Morison made an abortive start on his professional life, being apprenticed cooper in Wick in 1851, living there with his aunt Janet WRIGHT. His life work became bootmaking, at which trade he worked in Edinburgh, Newcastle, and Glasgow. Morison was named after John Morison, the minister at Canisbay from 1780-1798. He died at Glasgow in 1907. Isabella the daughter of Donald McDONALD and Christian McFARLANE, was born in 1840, Jan. 22, at Balquhiddar, the second youngest of six. At the time of her marriage she was a domestic servant, and probably met Morison in Edinburgh. She died in 1915, Oct. 31, in Glasgow.
- + 26. George, b. 1862, May 16, Edinburgh. Married Ellen WILLISHER.
- + 27. Donald, b. 1864, May 31, Edinburgh. Married Jean Bruce McGILP.
28. Christina McFarlane, b. 1866, May 21, Edinburgh. Unmarried.
- + 29. Andrew, b. 1868, Dec. 11, Edinburgh. Married Mary Blair ROSS.
30. Catherine, b. 1871, July 10, Edinburgh. Unmarried.
- + 31. Alexander, b. 1875, in England. Married Mary MOFFAT.
- + 32. Janet, b. 1878, in England. Married Colin ROSS.
33. William, b. 1881, June 16, Glasgow. Married Annie ? . No Family
17. Robert BEGG [3], b. 1860, was a farmer at Rattar, a few miles west of Gills. He and wife Helen SHEARER had two children.
34. Alexander BEGG. Killed in France, WW I.
35. George BEGG, farmer also at Rattar.
18. Catherine Wright BEGG [3], b. 1862, and married Malcolm McDONALD. Catherine and Malcolm moved to Brisbane, Aust., where Catherine died about 1930.
36. Malcolm George McDONALD, twin to:
37. Alexander Roderick McDONALD. Married Daisy ?
38. Elizabeth Wares McDONALD. Married Oliver ROBERTSON.

39. Hector McDONALD. Unmarried.  
 40. William Ewart McDONALD.  
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## GENEALOGICAL GEMS FROM IONA

26. George Morison WARES [3], b. 1862, and married Ellen Louisa WILLISHER at Haddington, in 1886, Oct. 21. Ellen was born the daughter of George WILLISHER and Margaret CUNNINGHAM, at London in 1865, Jan 14. At the time of her marriage, she was a boot saleswoman. Her father was a shoemaker, and his father before him. George and Margaret had come to Haddington not long after her birth. George WARES at his marriage was also a boot salesman, and his father a bootmaker. At his death in 1916, Nov. 15, George called himself "The People's Bootman" in his advertising, and had a shop in Partick and another in Govan. Shoes ran in the family - two of his daughters worked in the shops, and two of his aunts also worked in shoe shops. Ellen Louisa died 1950, Mar. 28, in Glasgow.

64. Margaret, b. 1887 in Glasgow. Married Archibald James LAMONT.

65. Isobel McDonald, b. 1889, June 16. Married Archibald HARDILL.

66. William, b. 1891, Glasgow. Married ? .

67. Ellen, b. 1894, July 8. Married Francis ARMOUR.

68. George, b. 1899, Glasgow. Married May GEDDIE.

69. Gilbert, b. 1902 Oct. 20, Glasgow. Unmarried ? . Died Aust. 1970.

27. Donald WARES [3], b. 1864, and married Jean Bruce McGILP. Donald died in Hamilton, in 1921. He founded a cartage business in Hamilton.

70. Isabella McDonald, b. 1899. Unmarried. Living Hamilton 1982.

71. Jean . Married William WATT.

72. Morrison, b. 1904. Married 1. Jean ?., and 2. Elizabeth ? .

29. Andrew Snoddy WARES [3], b. 1868, and married Mary Blair ROSS in 1880. Andrew was a butcher by trade. He died in Glasgow? in 1925.

73. Jessie. Married William LAWRIE.

74. William. Died young.

75. Isabella. Married John BELL.

76. Jennie. Died young.

77. Lily. Married Donald MONTGOMERY.

78. Morrison. Married Matilda CONNOR.

79. Catherine. Married James LAING.

80. David, b. 1907. Married Margaret MacNEIL.

31. Alexander WARES [3], b. 1875, and married Mary MOFFAT.

81. Morrison, b. 1905, d. 1941.

82. May.

83. Isabella. Married J. SCOTT.

84. Ronald, b. 1905. Living Paisley 1982.

32. Janet WARES [3], b. 1878, and married Colin ROSS. Janet died 1965.

85. Isabel, b. 1920. Married John MARTIN.

86. Catherine Stewart, b. 1917. Married James FLEMING (d. 1980).

Records of deaths are rare enough, in the Highland parish registers, and where they do exist the information given is often scanty. The following entries, taken at random from the Old Parish Register for the Isle of Iona, Argyll (OPR 538/1), are not only unusual - they are absolute gems.

They reveal the human tragedy of young deaths from whooping cough and something called "chincough" (of which there were several in late 1844 and early 1845), and the parental heartbreak of losing three sons within a single month from "measles and looseness of blood"; they reveal the hazards of foreign bodies in one's porridge, and eating apples from Glasgow; and, presiding over this Black Comedy, we have the rather sinister figure of Dr. Beveridge, whose medical abilities, or lack of them, may be one reason why the Kirk Session felt it necessary to keep such a detailed record of deaths in the parish!

1846 - March 17. Allan, son to Archd Campbell, Kentra, died in consequence of catching cold after having the Measles.

December 8. Mrs Kenedy, sister to the Revd Alexr McGregor, died at Iona where her remains were interred on the 16th because the weather proved unfavourable to take her Corpse to her native place in Perthshire.

1847 - January 13. Flora Mckinon died aged 88 and her father Niel Mckinon lived to the age of 100 yrs.

July 1. Niel, son to Willm Beaton, Crofter, Creich, died in Ardrishaig in consequence of bad maltreatment from his employers (as supposed).

July 1. Alexr, son to John MacGilvra, Bra, died of Measles and looseness of blood.

July 11. Dond, son to John McGilvra, Bra, died of the same disease with his brother as above.



- 1847 - July 30. Dugald, son to John McGilvra, Bra, died of the same disease as his brothers as above.
- 1848 - March 21. Archd McLean, Elder, Creich, died suddenly this morning, having been in his usual health at time of going to bed.
- March 31. Mary Macdonald, wife of the above Archd McLean, died having never awoke after a dose of laudanum had been administered to her by Dr. Beveridge.
- 1849 - September 30. Christina, born 15 July 1844, and Jessie, born Octr 11 1838 (lawful children of the late Hugh McCormick, Elder, Creich) died supposed of Cholera, but Dr. Beveridge, who saw their corpses, said their death was caused by the eating of apples which their Mother brought from Glasgow.

October 4. Angus, son of Donald McGilvra, Ariglass, died in consequence of a bit of glass which he swallowed in his porrage.

- 1850 - October 5. John, son of Niel MacDonald, East End of Iona, was killed with a shot which went off from his gun in his own hand on the 28th.

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#### LETTER

The National Federation of Cemetery Friends is a nation-wide network of groups set up to preserve and enhance the architecture and ecology of local (usually Victorian) cemeteries. We would like to know of any cemetery under threat of clearance or "improvement". Although each member group is fully occupied with its own cemetery and cannot undertake to campaign for or maintain any others, the NFCF will gladly give advice and help to anyone who wishes to set up a new group for the benefit of a cemetery thus threatened. There is plenty of expertise to call on, and enquiries will be redirected to the most appropriate member group. Churchyards are outside the scope of the NFCF.

Mrs S.M. Barnard, 2 North Park Road, Leeds LS8 1JD.

### FREEMASONS in FORT WILLIAM in 1751

The Fort William Lodge of Freemasons must have been one of the earliest in the Highlands, and their records survive from 1743, although the lodge was in existence for several years before that. These records are at present in the custody of Mr John A. Fraser, 26 Clunes Avenue, Caol, Fort William, Inverness-shire PH33 7BJ. He writes: "I have a complete list of members from 1743 onwards. There are a few hundred names, some of them give place of residence (town, township or district) and sometimes the occupation is given as well. I would be very pleased to try to help anyone who thinks that I might be of some assistance in tracing their Lochaber ancestors".

Mr Fraser has kindly provided the following list of members for 1751, to give us an idea of the material he has. We are also indebted to him for the interesting extract from the Lodge Minutes of 1746.

#### LIST OF BRETHREN BELONGING TO

#### THE FORT WILLIAM MASONIC LODGE, 1751

Duncan MacVICAR, Collector of the Customs at Fort William.  
 John MacPHAIL, Surveyor of the Said Customs.  
 George DOUGLAS, Master Gunner of Fort William.  
 Alexander MUIR, Storekeeper of Fort William.  
 William MacINTOSH, Merchant in Maryburgh.  
 James GLASS, Writer in Maryburgh.  
 William STEWART, Merchant in Maryburgh.  
 Charles STEWART, Writer in Auchintore.  
 Hugh GLASS, Merchant in Maryburgh.  
 James SMITH, Ordinance Smith in Fort William.  
 Patrick MacLACHLAN, Merchant in Maryburgh.  
 Archibald MacLACHLAN, Merchant in Maryburgh.  
 John RITCHIE, Vinther in Maryburgh.  
 John MacCORMAIG, Merchant in Maryburgh.  
 Thomas GLASS, Chapman in Maryburgh.  
 David BROWN, Chaingekeeper in Maryburgh.  
 John MASON, A Working Mason in Maryburgh.  
 John CAMERON, Esq., of Fassiferu.  
 John HAMILTON, Esq., Factor to His Grace the Duke of Gordon.  
 Donald CAMERON, Tacksman of Corrychurachan.





SHETLAND FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS, 1814

Belmont, Shetland.  
17th May, 1814.

Mr Leisk,

You will receive the funeral Company as they arrive at the Front door, and conduct them first to me in the Parlour. Then shew them upstairs, where you will act for me as Entertainer. Ordering a Dram first to each as they enter, and afterwards putting round a Glass of Wine and Bread at moderate intervals drinking the health of each successively as they come in. This will be continued an hour or so.

When you will call out the Messrs Greig, Mr Scott, Mr Edmonton, Mr Archibald, Mr Ross to carry the coffin out from the Counting room to the back court on the walk to be placed on two foot stools and the hand spokes to be fastened to it.

You will then return to the Company and say, I believe all is ready, ordering a dram to be put round and a good afternoon drink. Mr Greig senior to the head of the Coffin, Mr James to the foot, the Principal Gentry to take the first lift. John Sinclair to shew the road.

When the Chest is laid down and the grave filled again, order a Glass of Wine round then another or more as the Company feel inclined and lastly a Dram again.

Our committee member, John Durham, supplied the above letter, which was written to his 3-greats-grandfather, Thomas Leisk (1762-1837), in Uyea, Shetland. John comments: "The letter seems to be from a third party, possibly a solicitor, giving instructions about the funeral arrangements. We suspect the deceased might be Mrs Greig, but unfortunately there are no burial records in that area before about 1827."

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CONFERENCE

The Fourth British Family History Conference, organised by the Association of Family History Societies of Wales and the Federation of Family History Societies, will be held at the College of Librarianship, Wales, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, from August 21-25, 1987. Details from: The Bookings Officer, 61 Rockes Meadow, Knighton, Powys LD7 1LE.

NEW MEMBERS

482 AIRD Mrs Ena, Glenurquhart Farm, Cromarty, Ross & Cromarty.  
463 ANDERSON Mrs N R, Ashley Downs, Clinton, South Otago, New Zealand.  
464 BAILEY Miss J M MacD, 35 Breach Close, Brixworth, Northants.  
476 BRISON Mr Robert I, 34 Bridge Terrace, Bedlington, Northumberland.  
466 BROWN Mrs Thea, 216 Mount Pleasant Rd., Christchurch 8, New Zealand.  
497 CLARK Mr John R, 117 Links Avenue, Churchtown, Southport PR9 9QD.  
486 FINLAYSON Mr & Mrs Kenneth, 'Silverglade', Croy, Inverness.  
473 GODFREY Miss Eileen I, 100 Wincott Drive, Weston, Ont. M9R 2P4, Canada.  
478 GRANT Mrs Mildred, 7316 S.W. 32nd Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97219, USA.  
495 HAY Dr A B, 26 Drummond Road, Inverness IV2 4NF.  
483 HOLMES Mrs V C T, 55 Temple Road, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 2EB.  
469 HOUISON Mr Norman L, 7 Henry Street, Lidcombe, NSW 2141, Australia.  
474 KNUITSEN Mrs Barbara R, PO Box 188, Winfield, BC V0H 2C0, Canada.  
468 MacARTHUR Ms Mairi, 8 Starbank Road, Edinburgh EH5 3BW.  
496 MacDONALD Mrs Frances, Mill House, Gruids, Lairg, Sutherland IV27 4EE.  
488 MacGREGOR Mr Robert R, PO Box 205, Yass, NSW 2582, Australia.  
494 McINNES Mrs Cynthia, Box 348, Yeppoon, Queensland 24703, Australia.  
479 McKENZIE Mr John D, 50 Parker Road, Oratia RD, Auckland 7, New Zealand.  
477 McKENZIE Miss Rosemary J, 20 Fowler St, Coburg 3058, Melbourne, Aust.  
475 MacKENZIE Dr William K R, PO Box 18, N. Tamborine, Que. 4272, Aust.  
470 MACKIE Miss Ada M, 1 Ardholm Place, Inverness IV2 4QG.  
493 MacRAE Mr Peter, 39c Heathfield Road, London SW19 2PH.  
462 NESBITT Mrs Ethel C, 5 Kennedy Drive, Scorguie, Inverness IV3 6QR.  
487 NICHOLLS Mrs E, 28 Kingsdown Close, Basildon, Essex SS13 2NU.  
484 O'BRIEN Mr W, Flat C4 Pendragon, 150 Wong Ma Kok Rd, Stanley, Hong Kong.  
465 ROBERTSON Mr Lachlan, 'Carsbheim', Elgol, Isle of Skye IV49 9BJ.  
480 ROEN Mrs M J, Box 270, Duchess, Alberta T0J 0Z0, Canada.  
471 SCHAMPPEL Mrs H B, 2191 Carter Ave, St Paul, Mn 55108, USA.  
485 SEYMOUR Mr Michael J, 12 Dartmouth Ter, Kendrick Rd, Reading, Berks.  
467 SMETHURST Mr & Mrs J, 81 Parrin Lane, Winton, Eccles, Manchester.  
472 SMIT-NIELSEN Mrs Henny, 47 Emberdale Way, Airdrie, Alta T0M 0B0, Canada.  
491 SUTERS Mrs Hazel, 23 Campbell St, Mauchope, NSW 2446, Australia.  
481 SYMON Mr Ian W, 8 Cooper Street, Hopeman, Elgin, Moray IV30 2SD.  
490 TAIT Mrs Doreen, 26 Beechwood Ave, Low Fell, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear.  
492 THOMPSON Mrs Barbara, Apt 3, 815 S.E. 42nd Ave, Portland, Or 97215, USA.  
489 WILLIAMS Mrs I L, 11 Grange Avenue, Ryde, Isle of Wight PO33 3LS.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

259 FAHLMAN Mrs Deborah, Box 56, R.R. 5, Duncan, B.C., Canada.  
232 MacLEAN Mr J A, 2170 Marine Dr, Suite 502, Oakville, Ont L6L 5V1 Canada  
422 McLEOD Mrs H, 2 Brookfield Terrace, Tauranga, New Zealand.

## A 1793 HIGHLAND EMIGRATION TO CANADA

A fascinating glimpse of the perils and travails faced by Highland emigrants to Canada in the late 18th century is given in the following document, transcribed and submitted to us by Mr Duncan MacDonald, 268 Bartholomew Street, Brockville, Ontario, Canada K6V 2S6 (author of the article on "Roman Catholics in Upper Canada" in our last issue, No.19).

The document is a petition to the Government by Captain Alexander MacLeod (of the Drynoch, Skye, family) who, at the third attempt, set sail at the head of 150 emigrants from Glenelg, Glenmoriston, Strathglass and Knoydart, to the settlement of Lochiel in Upper Canada, in 1793.

By 1837, more than 40 years later, MacLeod is old, blind and not a little put out that the authorities have still not granted him the 1000 acres he believes he is due for his pains, and which he claims other leaders have already received.

After all, he points out, he went to "a great deal of personal trouble and expenses in having the settlers carried through the different stages of their voyages ... without ever having had any remuneration whatever", and his example "did in a great measure turn the tide of emigration from the United States to the British Colonies". And he adds for good measure that "during the last War with the United States" he served as a Captain in the 2nd Regiment of Glengarry Militia. The outcome of the petition is apparently not known.

### PETITION

To His Excellency,         ? Bond K.C.H., Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Upper Canada.

The Petition of ALEXANDER McLEOD of the 6th concession of Lochiel, Yeoman, most respectfully sheweth:-

1793 your petitioner having determined on emigrating to this Province, gave up the possessions he held in the Highlands of Scotland, but previous to his departure he engaged 150 SETTLERS FROM GLENELG, GLENMORRISTON, STRATHGLASS, and KNOIDART to accompany him.

That for this purpose he went twice from Glenelg to Greenoch, freighted a Ship there to carry himself and the other Settlers to this Province, and she having proceeded from Greenock to Culreagh [Kylreha ? - Ed] in Glenelg, arrived there on the

12th of June 1793, and all the Settlers being there awaiting her arrival, they were all embarked with their baggage by your petitioner, and she set sail on her destined voyage on the 15th of the same month.

That the Ship had proceeded on her voyage to nearly HALFWAY ACROSS THE ATLANTIC when they encountered a most tremendous STORM which caused her to spring a very dangerous LEAK, in which the officers of the Ship having held a consellation, it was indulged best and safest that the Ship should RETURN TO GREENOCK to have the leak repaired rather than run the risk of perishing at Sea by prosecuting the voyage further at present. That the Ship did accordingly return to Greenock where your petitioner and his Settlers were landed and where remained there a fortnight waiting until another same Ship or some other Vessel could be got ready.

That the Company from whom your petitioner freighted the Ship got a BRIG ready at the end of the fortnight, and your petitioner having again embarked his Settlers with their baggage she          (sailed?) on her intended voyage, but had not been out more than 4-days when a heavy squall of wind carried away HER UPPER MASTS AND SAILS on which she was obliged to return to LAMLASH in Scotland to have the damage repaired. There she remained 3-days and all things having been set to right again, she set SAIL and on the 1st of next November arrived during a severe SNOW STORM and excessively cold weather off Prince Edward Island, and not being able to proceed to QUEBEC on account of the lateness of the Season, she put in to CHARLOTTE-TOWN in that Island where the Settlers and your petitioner were obliged to winter. That during the course of the winter your petitioner proceeded to the South-side of the Island and engaged a large SCHOONER owned by some CANADIANS to carry his Settlers early in next Summer to Quebec.

That on the latter part of May the Schooner arrived at Charlotte-Town, and your petitioner having got all his Settlers and baggage on board, she proceeded on her voyage, and arrived AT QUEBEC ON THE 4th OF JUNE, 1794.

That your petitioner again engaged the same Schooner to carry them all to MONTREAL, where they arrived safe, a four days         ? thereafter. From thence they were accommodated with the King's

Boats with passage to the River Aux Raisin in this Province.

From thence they proceeded overland to what was then called "NORTH LANCASTER", now "LOCHIEL", and the Settlers, rather the Heads of Families, having obtained a Grant each of 200 acres of Land, they all settled down on their respective Lots and are now a thriving numerous body in their own person and in that of their descendants.

That your petitioner was at a great deal of personal trouble and expenses in having the settlers carried through the different stage of their voyages and otherwise until he had them properly settled down in this Province without ever having had any remuneration whatever, therefore, and being credibly informed that others who proceeded him, and others who subsequent to his arrival brought over Settlers to the \_\_\_\_\_ did each receive a Grant from the Government of 1,000 acres, as an encouragement to them for their laudable endeavours in helping to settle the Country, your petitioner humbly conceives that his merits in this respect being nothing inferior to that of others in the like case, he is justly entitled to receive at the hands of \_\_\_\_\_ the like Grants, more particularly seeing that his example did in a great measure turn the tide of emigration from the UNITED STATES to the BRITISH COLONIES.

Priest ALEXANDER MacDONELL, Lieut ANGUS MacDONELL, Mr MacDONELL-Greenfield, Mr MacMILLAN-Glenpean, and others, had 1,000 acres of Land each conferred on them, and as your petitioner stands in the self same situation as they stood, he has not a shadow of doubts the like reward will be extended to him as was to them.

Your petitioner could annex hereto the certificates of the heads of all the families he carried over with him as settlers, that he is of opinion that that of the Heads of four of the families will suffice, which are annexed herein accordingly -

Your petitioner has been blest with providence since his settling down in the Province, with a family of 11-SONS, 2 of whom are no more and 3-DAUGHTERS, being 12-CHILDREN now living, or none of whom did he ever receive any Land from the Government, altho others did receive Land who, no doubt, made application therefore.

He trusts, however, that his claim in this respect will be attended to at the same time that his other claim shall be allowed, and of both being most cheerfully allowed he has not any the least doubt, more, particularly considering the justice your Excellency and the Honorable Members of the Council are so alive to dispense to those having legitimate claims on the Government and you and their considerations.

Perhaps it may not be, or improper, in addition to this matter of fact before set forth, to mention that during the last WAR with the UNITED STATES your petitioner was honored by SIR ISAAC BROCK, then President administering the Government of this Province with a Captain's commission, dated on the 18th day of April 1812, in the 2nd REGIMENT OF GLENGARRY MILITIA, of which ALEXANDER MacDONELL, Esq., Greenfield, was Lieut-Colonel, and the duties of which he most faithfully continued to discharge until old age and the loss of his sight precluded his continuing longer in the command ..... On the whole then:-

May it graceously please your Excellency, and the Honourable Council to attentively consider your petitioners statements and merits and thereafter to grant him such a portion of Government Lands as others in his situation have received and at the same time to grant him on account of his family such a number of acres of Land as others with the like number of family did receive at the hands of our magnificent and most excellent Government. And he, as in duty bound shall ever pray.

ALEXANDER X McLEOD  
his mark

LOCHIEL, December 31st, 1837. His mark is admitted on account of his want of SIGHT to sign his name, this circumstance has been before mentioned.

We the subscribers, settlers now resident in this Province, and who came over with the Petitioner ALEXANDER McLEOD in 1794, having heard the foregoing Petition read to us in so far as the facts relating to the Petitioner and us are stated, do most unqualifiedly certify that the facts set forth are true in every particular.

In testimony whereof we have hereunto set our names at LOCHIEL this 15th day of January 1838.

ALEXANDER McLEOD, Lot-31, 6th-Lochiel, X his mark.  
 ARCHIBALD MCGILLIVRAY, Lot-27, 7th-Lochiel.  
 MALCOLM MCGILLIVRAY, Lot-25, 7th-Lochiel.  
 ALEXANDER McLEOD, Lot-26, 6th-Lochiel.

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Mr Macdonald writes:- "This Captain Alexander MacLeod (1769-1850), the Petitioner, is well documented in The MacLeods of Glengarry: 1793-1971, which shows him as the son of Alexander Kenneth MacLeod (of the Drynoch family) who also migrated with his son to Canada. In the Petition, he mentions four other migrations to Canada:-

Priest Alexander MacDonell:- This would be the Rev. Alasdair Mor MacDonell, the first R.C.

Bishop of Upper Canada who migrated in 1804/05.

Lieut. Angus MacDonell:- This would be Lt. Angus (Sandaig) MacDonell who organised the 1786 migration on the ship "McDonald".

Mr MacDonell, Greenfield:- This would be Alexander (Greenfield) MacDonell who was the first Greenfield to migrate to Canada, in 1792. Later the Commander of the 2nd Bat. of the Glengarry Militia (1812-1814). He was the 2nd of Greenfield, being the son of Angus, the 1st of Greenfield, a Major in the Glengarry Regt. at Culloden.

Mr MacMillan, Glenpean:- Would be the MacMillan migrations of 1802 (three ships)."

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## GRANT-AIDED SERVICE AT DUTHIL CHURCH

On Sunday, 10th August, there was a final service in the former Duthil Parish Church before it went into secular use by the Clan Grant Society. The sun shone over the graveyard where members of the society gathered, plus some local inhabitants who had last attended many years ago, before the congregation was transferred to Carrbridge.

These included a descendant of the Parish Minister of 1820-1862, one whose forebear was the Church Treasurer in 1760, and many whose relatives were interred below their feet.

The vandalised church has been cleaned out with windows repaired, walls replastered and painted by a member of the society.

The Clan Chief, Lord Strathspey, and his family, walked in procession, preceded by a piper. After a speech of welcome to all by the secretary, Mr David Grant Blyth, Lord Strathspey unveiled a plaque to commemorate the gift of the church to the society by Mr Gerald Brandon Bravo.

The service was taken by the Minister of Boat of Garten and Kincardine with Duthil (Carrbridge) - and was "Grant-aided"! The sermon was given by the Rev. George Grant of Dumfries; a reading was given by the Rev. Joseph Grant, retired minister of Cromdale; and the parable of the Good Samaritan was read from the 'New Testament in Scots' by the secretary, who also led the unaccompanied singing.

If the roof had not been repaired, the volume of noise would have shaken the rafters, and it was a moving experience to hear Crimond (harmonic arrangement by David Grant 1833-93) sung at full voice by Grants who had come from the other side of the world.

The morning ended with a tour of the churchyard and photographs on the steps of the Seafield Mausoleum before the mainly kilted congregation slowly drifted away to the cars and bus, the driver of which must have been chosen because he was a former grave-digger, and was therefore of great help in locating gravestones.

Mrs Margaret Mackenzie,  
 Tigh na h'ath,  
 Dulnain Bridge,  
 Nr. Grantown-on-Spey,  
 Morayshire PH26 3NU.

