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**EDITORIAL**

What nice people family-historians are! The last journal had me warning you of the dangers of Family History writing, illustrated by my being laid off (after five weeks short of 21 years, but who's counting?) shortly after putting a family history article into the company's in-house magazine. Then came letters from around the globe commiserating constructively, so I am out delivering leaflets too now, in between the exams I'm sitting for a serious qualification in computer networking. It's going well, and I hope one day to understand what it is I now know. Meanwhile I have developed into a Compuserve account, needed for the professional work, so you can email me on 106205.762@compuserve.com and I'll figure out how to read the messages and even reply. Those are *my* fresh woods and pastures new. Thank you all.

We have very recently brought out The MIs for the Old Ainess churchyard. And the war memorial being boarded up since Sandy Gillies surveyed it demonstrates the usefulness of publishing these things.

This month's article on the sailing of the Lady Egidia to Otago reminded me that Everyone Knows how low life expectancy was in the last century, which demonstrates how inaccurate Everyone can be. Look at the birth-death dates of the ancestors on your trees and note how many octogenarians there are. Until I prove it by analysing my own ancestors I will continue to suspect it to be more correct to say that the *average* of life lengths may have been short, but that average was brought down so low because it included a high level of child mortality. Thirty children died on that voyage. Separately, Peter Grant is right in saying that however valuable to us the list of passengers, the four surviving diaries "help breathe some life into the named emigrants' experience and remind us how awful a three-month voyage by sail must have been."

My co-editor has never been a fan of these new-fangled Internet account things designed for pseuds like me, until recently when his brother-in-law said to him: "Let's see what happens when we search for the family surname on the Internet". Within a short time the names of two of his American cousins appeared on the screen with the bonus of a photograph of one of them. With their email addresses he could, if connected himself, chat on-line and go file transferring to them, so he's suddenly a born-again Nethead and needs restraining.

There are a few Reunion users in Compuserve, and it got good reviews from many including John Durham, so that's the computer genealogy program I ended up buying for £84. I transferred all my carefully-done family trees from PAF on the Apple with no problem at all, the main thanks going to the Mormons for their GEDCOM standard, so always check that the software you invest in supports this standard and you too can transfer files all around the place. My A4 colour printer won't allow me to shrink the Reunion drop-charts (shame) so when I printed out the descendants from an 18<sup>th</sup>-century McColl it came out on 20 pages, now glued together and rolled up ready to annoy any foolish visitor who asks about family trees. The next thing I want is a charting program that draws a tree of all descendants from all ancestors, but as that may need three-dimensional paper this may be a problem.

We have a policy of not advertising as such in the journal, but many people are willing to offer assistance on their home ground in return for more of the same on someone else's, so we will add in a section of Help Wanted And Offered. No charge, we are just pleased to gain the warm glow of service in getting hard workers together.

*"Genealogy: an account of one's descent from an ancestor who did not particularly care to trace his own." (Ambrose Bierce.)*

## HIGHLAND EMIGRANTS TO OTAGO ON THE "LADY EGDIA"

by Peter F. W. Grant

### **Introduction**

We all have one or two of those elusive siblings of great grandfather/mother who, together with their families, simply seem to disappear between one census and another. Perhaps they emigrated? But where to? What about New Zealand - a country always popular with Scots, especially from the time it became a British colony in 1840.

Although it is difficult to estimate the number of Scots in New Zealand in the early decades, census returns by denomination provide a useful guide. By early 1871, nearly one in three of New Zealand's population of 219,000 were Presbyterian. This ratio was substantially higher than for many other colonies with the result that a great number of "pakeha" (or European-descended) New Zealanders have at least some Scottish ancestry. New Zealanders can admire their 19th century ancestors' resolve - a voyage under sail to New Zealand took on average over 3 months - an extremely long time to be confined in a small space with hundreds of others, living on a very basic diet and being pitched about in the turbulent southern oceans. Against such a background, it isn't difficult to imagine the origins of the term "cabin fever"!

### **To Otago?**

The Otago settlement in the south-east of the South Island of New Zealand was founded in 1848 by Free Church Scots. These first pioneers were mainly from the Lowlands, the Otago Association being an Edinburgh-based organisation. However the Scottish "flavour" of the province and its chief settlement of Dunedin attracted settlers from throughout Scotland, including many Highlanders. Indeed it was not long before demand arose for Gaelic church services in Dunedin. Highlanders in Otago (and its offspring province of Southland) were spread among the other settlers and the language did not generally live beyond that immigrant generation - unlike the Highland settlement of Waipu in the North Island. Appearing below is evidence of one immigrant's happiness in his new home. It is a verse from a song entitled:

*"Oran A' Moladh Otago":*

*'S gur h-e Otago am fearann priseil,*      It's in Otago the land is fertile,  
*Le cruithneachd fhealt' s e cinninn ann,*      And wheat that's finest is growing there,  
*Coirce 's grainneach gu torach, lamhhor,*      Oats with grain that is filled with kernels,  
*Is por gun aireamh a' fas air t' fhom.*      And plants unnumbered the soil supports.

Economically, Otago struggled in its first decade of organised settlement. However, the discovery of gold in May 1861 caused a massive boom in the economy and the population. The number of settlers in Otago's "gold rush era" of 1861-70 increased almost 600% from 12,000 to just under 70,000; the people inhabiting an area over 2½ times the size of the modern-day Highland Region. The satirists of the time classified those who arrived in Otago prior to the discovery of gold as the "Old Identities" and those who arrived in pursuit of the yellow ore and on the back of the boom as the "New Iniquities". It must be said however, many of the "Old Identities" prospered from businesses servicing the "New Iniquities"!

### **Passenger Lists**

Surviving passenger lists to Otago are rare, primarily due to the genealogist's nightmare - fire - which destroyed most of the Otago Provincial Government's immigration records. Each of

New Zealand's semi-autonomous Provincial Governments had been primarily responsible for its own immigration recruitment until their abolition in 1876. Otago had one of the more visionary provincial governments and from a very early period had established its own assisted immigration scheme. Due to this loss of records, lists of immigrants are primarily limited to ship's passenger lists extracted from the newspapers of the time. Publication of such lists was a manageable task for early journalists and allowed settlers to check if any acquaintances from home had arrived. Unfortunately, the influx of miners from mid-1861 made the task of publication almost impossible; the number of incoming vessels to Otago increasing from just 69 in 1860 to 256 in 1861. Because of this huge influx, the publication of passenger lists of steers passengers ceased almost entirely at this time. Thus, if you speculate that a sibling of a great-grandparent went to Otago in the 1860s, primary sources are almost non-existent. A project co-ordinated by the New Zealand Society of Genealogists to index the 1860s passenger lists of ships sailing from Victoria, Australia to New Zealand ports is currently under way - a great many miners having moved on to the Otago and Westland gold rushes from the earlier Victorian rushes.

### **The "Lady Egidia"**

The "Lady Egidia" was a large sailing vessel of 1235 tons built at Ardrrossan on the Clyde. She was completed in September 1860 and launched by her namesake, the young Lady Egidia Montgomerie, daughter of the 13th Earl of Eglinton. The local newspaper heralded the "Lady Egidia" as 'one of the largest, if not the largest, wooden vessel ever built in Scotland'. The cargo for the ship's maiden voyage to Otago in those pre-goldrush days was comprised of emigrants and sundry provisions. One of the writer's ancestors was among the emigrants.

The ship sailed for Otago from the Clyde on 10 Oct 1860. Because of the larger number of Highland emigrants on the "Lady Egidia" than was usual, there were two services held each Sunday for the duration of the voyage - one in Gaelic and one in English. The nature of the shipboard diary entries of a young Aberdonian cabin passenger, Margaret King, illustrates a distinct lack of prior contact with her Highland countryfolk. She recorded early in the voyage:

*"Yesterday had a service in Gaelic - reminded me a good deal of German. Singing was fair, though not at all like our tunes. Some of the Gaelic women take peculiar turns of sickness, the principal symptoms being that they won't speak to anyone."*

Perhaps the Highland women were simply too seaisick to talk!

The voyage was notable at the time for two factors: first, for bringing the largest number of immigrants to arrive at Otago by one ship, and secondly, for the extremely high number of deaths of children - the death toll being more reminiscent of the infamous Irish "coffin ship" emigrations to USA in the famine years. There were 32 deaths during the voyage, all but two of them were children.

### **The Passengers**

The passenger list published in the "Otago Witness" newspaper specified the homes of most of the passengers. This information is extremely rare in a newspaper list. Below appear the names of those emigrants:

- (a) whose previous place of residence was Highland or Island (including those close to those areas),
- (b) bearing Highland surnames but living in other areas;



(c) sharing a surname with a Highland or Island passenger (in case of relationship)  
The letters beside names refer to shipboard accommodation (C = cabin, I = intermediate, S or no mention = steerage) and/or status (U = unassisted immigrant, A = assisted immigrant under the Orago Provincial Government's immigration scheme). All assisted immigrants travelled steerage.

AITKEN Alexander and Elizabeth, SU  
AITKEN Elizabeth, died of diarrhoea 24 Nov 1860 age 21 mths  
AITKEN Henry, Lerwick, A  
AITKEN John and wife, A  
CAMERON Angus, IU  
CAMERON Daniel, wife, 2 sons, Edinburgh, A  
CAMERON John, wife, 2 sons, Ullapool, A  
CAMERON William, Gartloch [?Gairloch] A  
CAMPBELL Christina, died of diarrhoea 22 Nov 1860 age 1 yr  
CAMPBELL Daniel, Edinburgh, A  
CAMPBELL Donald, wife, 2 sons, 1 dau, Portree, A  
CAMPBELL James, SU  
CAMPBELL Samuel, wife, 1 son, 1 dau, Portree, A  
CAMPBELL William, died of diarrhoea 22 Nov 1860 age 1 yr  
CLARK Donald, 1 son, 1 dau, Dunoon, A  
CLARK John, died of diarrhoea 14 Jan 1861 age 18 mths  
CULLEN Thomas, Dunblane, A  
DUNCAN James, wife, 1 son, Elgin, A  
FINLAYSON Roderick, Lochcarron, A  
FRASER Alexander, Falkirk, A  
GAIR John, Elgin, A  
GIBB Ebenezer, Dingwall, A  
GRANT Alexander, wife, 1 son, Carrbridge, A  
GRANT Alexander, SU  
GRANT or JUSTICE Mary, 2 dau, A  
GRANT Jemima, Glasgow, A  
GRANT John, Elgin, A  
GRANT Lachlan, Grantown, A  
GRANT Jessie, died of cyanche tracheitis 28 Dec 1860 age 6 yrs  
GRANT Peter, died of cyanche tracheitis 31 Dec 1860 age 18 mths  
GRANT Alexander, died of abscess of the neck 4 Jan 1861 age 4 yrs  
GRANT Elsie, Whitehaven, A  
GUNN William, Ayr, A  
HENDERSON John, SU  
ISBISTER John, Kirkwall  
MACANDREW Donald, CU  
MCAULEY J. Grantown, A  
McCALLUM Duncan, wife, CU  
McCOLL Ewen, wife, Lochgiphead, A  
McCOLL Ronald and Jane, Ballachulish  
McCOLL Jane, SU  
McCOLL James, SU  
McCOLL Duncan, died of diarrhoea 10 Nov 1860 age 15 mths

McCOLL Cecilia, died of diarrhoea 13 Dec 1860 age 2 yrs 6 mths  
McDONALD Alexander, Laggan, A  
McFARLANE John and Jessie, SU  
McGILLIVRAY John E and Jane, SU  
McGREGOR Alexander and Betsy, Dornoch, A  
McGREGOR Robert, died of diarrhoea 15 Dec 1860 age 3 yrs  
McGREGOR Robert, died of debility after rubeola 14 Jan 1861 age 10 yrs  
McINNES William, wife, Partick, A  
McKAY Adam, died of diarrhoea 15 Dec 1860 age 3 yrs  
McKAY George, Newmills, A  
McKAY William, wife, 2 sons, Golspic, A  
McKAY William and Lillias, Renton, A  
MACKENZIE Ann, Edinburgh, A  
McKENZIE Murdo, SU  
McKERRAS Thomas, Grantown, A  
McLACHLAN Charles, SU  
McLEAN -, son, born 5 Dec 1860  
McLEAN, John, wife, Ullapool, A  
McLEAN K, wife, Ullapool, A  
McLEAN Kenneth, Lochcarron, A  
McLEAN Kenneth, Wick, A  
McLEAN Margaret, died diarrhoea 10 Dec 1860 age 2 yrs  
McLEAN Thomas, IU  
McLENNAN A, wife, A  
McLENNAN Hugh, Carrbridge, A  
McLENNAN Thomas, Fortrose, A  
McLEOD Alexander, Ullapool, A  
McLEOD Daniel, Grinds, Lairg, A  
McLEOD Mary, Ullapool, A  
McNAUGHTON J. wife, SU  
McNAUGHTON James, David, Margaret, William, A  
McNAUGHTON Jane, SU  
McNICHOL John, died of cyanche tracheitis 3 Jan 1861 age 2 yrs 6 mths  
McNICHOL Malcolm, wife, 1 son, 1 dau, Greenock, A  
McPHERSON Isabella, Edinburgh, A  
McRAE Duncan, wife, 4 sons, 3 daus, A  
McRAE James, SU  
McRAE Roderick, Alness, A  
MURRAY Catherine, A  
PATON Andrew, Dunkeld, A  
REID Hugh, wife, Maryhill, A  
REID Mary and Thomas, SU  
REID Robert, Duntocher, A  
ROBERTSON Donald, A  
ROSE Kenneth, IU  
ROSS Alexander, Edinburgh, A  
ROSS James, Ardgay, A  
ROSS Kenneth, IU  
SHAW Angus, wife, 3 sons, Elgin, A

SHAW Ann, Rothesay, A

SINCLAIR John and Janet, Port Ellen, A

SMITH Miss C. C

SMITH Charles, Grantown, A

SMITH Malcolm, Jura, A

STEWART Alexander, wife, 1 son, Ullapool, A

STEWART John, SU

STEWART William, Gourroch, A

TAYLOR William, Elgin, A

THOMSON John, Lerwick, A

WILLIAMSON B, Lerwick, A

### Their Diaries

The descendants of the "Lady Egidia" immigrants are extremely fortunate in that four shipboard diaries kept by individual immigrants have survived. The centenary re-union publication usefully combined the more interesting entries from the available diaries, and the random extracts below give a fascinating insight into more than three months of claustrophobic shipboard life; the happy, the sad, the fearful and (more usually) the monotonous.

14 Oct 1860: Ship pitching and rolling - sea washing over the deck. Almost everyone is sick and writing is difficult.

15 Oct 1860: Weather very rough - ship rolling a good deal - seas mountainous high and coming on deck. Unable to eat. The roast mutton, salt meat and preserved potatoes waltzed off the table with one roll of the ship.

24 Oct 1860: Some word of the young women misbehaving on Sunday night.

3 Nov 1860: The mate stated that the week's provisions were all served out and that there would be no dinner. This caused a general outcry.

6 Nov 1860: Two young lads were charged with stealing a bottle of brandy from the stores. They were with the mate getting provisions and someone reported them, so they were handcuffed and tied to the stanchels of the mizzen mast on the poop, standing there for a couple of hours.

8 Nov 1860: Captain McCallum [referred to by one diarist as "an old Highland gentleman"] called a meeting on the poop today to form a rifle corps - 42 enrolled.

10 Nov 1860: Rifle corps put into squads - had some drill - very hard to keep one's place with the motion of the ship.

11 Nov 1860: Captain read burial service for a 15 month old child who died overnight.

15 Nov 1860: A good many children sick, and little hope of recovery.

22 Nov 1860: So hot that the young men in Intermediate are sleeping out on the deck.

23 Nov 1860: Crossed the equator.

27 Nov 1860: The water for drinking is very bad and needs a good large piece of sponge to filter it. It can scarcely be drunk without something strong in it.

28 Nov 1860: A child's burial service this morning. The ceremony gone through is the first, second and third double verses of the 90th Psalm sung to the tune of Bolhill. Then the 19th Psalm is read, then a prayer, the body is dropped over the side,

then a prayer.

3 Dec 1860: The cook put salt water in the pea soup.

5 Dec 1860: People sleepy and indolent.

9 Dec 1860: Now in the latitude of the Cape, but we are 1,500 miles west of it.

10 Dec 1860: Cabin passengers trying to shoot albatrosses all day, but never so much as knocked a feather out of one.

13 Dec 1860: Scores of whales today spouting in all directions.

14 Dec 1860: Children's death list now 13. Today, two families lost their only child and another the last three children. Three deaths in 12 hours - a great trial to parents.

17 Dec 1860: Still some cases of measles on board. Many complaints against the Doctor the way he is doing.

18 Dec 1860: A committee formed in the steerage to receive all complaints re: provisions.

22 Dec 1860: Another death today - the mother had left an ill-doing husband to fight her own way, but the hand of God has relieved her of her burden. The sea was lashing over the forecastle - in danger of being pitched out of bed. It takes all one's time to hold fast.

25 Dec 1860: Christmas Day - very little difference to us - only an additional plum duff.

30 Dec 1860: Sea running mountain high. As we were undressing, water came bursting in at doors and windows and almost drowned us.

31 Dec 1860: Last night water sufficient to drive a mill wheel was coming down the hatch and swirling around our bunks. When night came there was Hogmanay.

Most of the sailors were away aft at the young women's quarters celebrating. There was singing, fiddling, dancing and shouting - no sleep until the morning. We remember and think about our friends and family at home.

1 Jan 1861: It is surprising we could be so merry last night, for so many have been

involved in grief. We have entered into the month now that, if spared and well, we expect to see our adopted country, and I hope it might be happy and prosperous to us all.

4 Jan 1861: Another family lost their third and last child [a Grant family].

5 Jan 1861: The preserved potatoes are not edible owing to their nasty taste and smell.

10 Jan 1861: Otago 10 days away? - counting the days now!

11 Jan 1861: Piercing cold - unpleasant as there is no fire to go to.

14 Jan 1861: Progress slow - still 1,000 miles to go. A Scotch mist tonight.

17 Jan 1861: Sailors issued pieces of freestone for scrubbing the deck. Passengers expected to do it. However, the single females refuse to come under subjection and their dinner was kept from them.

18 Jan 1861: The third mate went down last night to read the rules to the young females; they did not listen but hissed and clapped their hands until he was obliged to retire in confusion.

21 Jan 1861: At 3 am a cry of "Land Oh". The people were all running to and fro in an excited state. It was Stewart Island - not over 2 1/2 miles away - we came

*people with large families are not so readily absorbed; but temporary work is provided for all. We understand that some of the young men have refused offers of £50 per annum with rations. We have no wish to interfere with their making the best bargain they can, but we must advise them that permanent situations at such rates are far better than the apparently higher rate of 7/- per diem for day labour, when the expense of board and lodging in the town, and the loss of time from broken weather is taken into consideration [little did the editor know there would be a gold rush in two months!] ..... With these few words of practical advice, we have to give those who have become our fellow-colonists, a hearty welcome to Otago, and to express the wish that they may prosper in the land of their adoption."*

The "Lady Egidia" immigrants and their descendants were an unusually cohesive group. Under the auspices of the Otago Early Settlers Association, a 50th anniversary celebration of the ship's arrival was held by surviving passengers and their descendants in Dunedin in 1911. Then in 1961, many descendants of passengers gathered in Dunedin to celebrate the centenary of the ship's arrival. Family reunions held to co-incide with an immigrant ancestor's arrival are now reasonably common in New Zealand, but not so for whole shiploads of immigrants!

#### Postscript

The following verse refers to one aspect of life in the "Old Country" which emigrants were happy to leave behind and which they all hoped to avoid with a new beginning in Otago - the evil of poverty. The verse was written by one of Otago's early Scots pioneers and its first poet, John Barr of Craiglee (b1809; arrived on the "Dominion" 1852; d1889):

"There's nae place like Otago yet  
There's nae place wee beggar weans  
Or auld men shivering at our doors  
To beg for scraps or banes."

If any reader recognises a "lead" with a possible family member among the "Lady Egidia" emigrants, the writer would be happy to assist with further research in New Zealand.

#### Contact

Peter F.W. Grant, P O Box 1379, Christchurch 8015, New Zealand.

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- along the coast for 30 miles or so when we were in sight of our destined province Otago, the land we are making for. It was very pleasing and joyful to stand and look at the beautiful but rugged land after being so long at sea.
- Sun very hot - another birth this morning - the 7th, but also 32 deaths.
- 24 Jan 1861: Too far south to gain the Heads [of Otago Harbour]. Kept at sea all night - a breeze off the land is the cause of it.
- 25 Jan 1861: Tacked twice and got within half a mile of the Heads, but too late in the evening to get the pilot. Tacked out again - saw the signal light - put up two rockets about 9pm to make them aware of our arrival.
- 26 Jan 1861: Beautiful day, but provoking to say we are almost becalmed 16 miles off the Heads. The pilot came in search of us and came on board about 6pm.
- Anchored outside the bar about 8pm.
- 27 Jan 1861: Still at anchor - quite becalmed. Fine day.
- 28 Jan 1861: Weighed anchor and were towed up to Port Chalmers [the port near the entrance to Otago Harbour, close to Dunedin], anchoring again at about 4 miles inside the Heads. Went up the harbour in a small steamer to Dunedin and planted foot on land again at 1pm - after 104 days at sea. [Diary entries are rather brief and factual at this point - obviously there was much to do!]

The immigrants' arrival merited a special editorial in the "Otago Witness" 2 Feb 1861. This is not surprising given that a total of over 400 immigrants represented quite an infusion of new blood to such a small population. The editorial gives an interesting insight into the reception of the immigrants and how they fared during their first week in the settlement:

*"The Egidia brings the largest number of passengers ever landed in Otago by one vessel and gives an addition to our population of upwards of 400 souls ..... the supply of provisions and water, as regards both quality and quantity, is favourably reported upon by the passengers. We, however regret to learn that there have been 32 deaths - the whole, with the exception of two, being children. The death of the two adults was to have been expected from the state of health in which they left the Home country; but the loss of so many children, we are persuaded, must arise from want of proper care and attention on the part of the medical officer. There is nothing in the voyage to New Zealand, either in its length or the latitude passed through which should make it destructive to children ..... On Monday afternoon the "Geelong" brought up the passengers to Dunedin. The jetty was crowded by the inhabitants of the city, who came down in numbers to welcome friends or to catch a peep at the new arrivals - who judging from the cheering from the loaded deck of the "Geelong", were glad enough to be at their journey's end, and to land in safety in the land of their adoption. The male immigrants, with a few exceptions, appeared to be hale, strong, hearty fellows, who will be an acquisition to our community. The whole were quickly housed in the Immigration Barracks, which afford ample accommodation ..... The demand for services of the new arrivals, was, as usual, considerable and numbers have already found permanent situations. The young men and female servants have no difficulty in this matter - the married*







Their youngest son, William, was born 20th December 1834. The family left Appin to return to Morvern in 1846 but William junior always considered himself an Appin man. There is no trace of either William or Janet in the 1841 census although several of their children are residing at Caolard in Morvern under the apparent care of their nineteen-year-old brother, Angus, who was a shoemaker. By 1851, William junior was living with his aunt Catherine Macgregor at Park in Morvern.

Like so many in those times of hardship, William soon left for Glasgow and from 1855 to 1863, he worked as a storeman for Alexander Crisp & Sons, seed and grain merchants at 51 Argyll Street. They found him "intelligent, active and trustworthy" and "he wrote well and speedily, calculates well and keeps his book and accounts correctly. He is strictly sober and honest".

While in Glasgow, William met Elizabeth MacLachlan and they were married in Barony parish in 1858, one of the witnesses being the Session Clerk, David MacBrayne. Elizabeth had been born at Knock in Morvern in 1834. Her father, Duncan, was a carpenter and her mother was Janet Mackinnon. When Elizabeth moved to Glasgow is unknown, but in the year of her marriage, her father and two young brothers emigrated in the 'Golconda' to Sydney, New South Wales to join her oldest brother Donald. Her mother had apparently died earlier.

With most of her family already in the colony and also William's brothers John and Angus, it seemed inevitable that William and Elizabeth would also emigrate. This they did in 1863 aboard the 'Persia' accompanied by their infant son, William. Elizabeth, at least, never became fully reconciled to her life in the new country and seldom spoke anything except Gaelic for the rest of her life. Fortunately, the family settled where there were many Gaelic speakers. After a brief sojourn in Sydney, they quickly followed other members of the family north to Woodford Island in the mighty Clarence River. This country was just being opened to settlement and Woodford Island is one of the largest river islands in the world. It was most suited to dairying and sugar cane growing. The names of the early farmers on the island are predominantly Scottish and Highland.

Meanwhile, the other strands of the family had already settled in New South Wales. John Dunmore Lang, a prominent figure in the affairs of the Australian colonies, had established a scheme to bring out Highlanders especially to the Hunter Valley. Ship after ship left Ujig in Skye and other Highland ports carrying these hopeful settlers. Among them, on the 'Henry Porcher' in 1839 was John Macmillan. He had been born to Duncan Macmillan, a crofter, and Catherine Mackenzie in the hamlet of Balmeanach outside Portree. He was accompanied on board by his three sisters. John was 25 years old, of "good bodily health and general usefulness" and could read. He was also very tall. In fact the tallness of the men from Skye was remarked upon in the colony.<sup>2</sup>

Twelve years later, in 1851, Margaret Mackinnon accompanied by her youngest brother Angus, also emigrated from Skye on board the 'Emperor'. She had been born in Kendram, parish of Kilmuir, Skye. Her parents were Ewan Mackinnon, a crofter, and Flora Cameron and her paternal grandparents were John Mackinnon and Dorcas Macleod. The name of Dorcas has been handed down to each generation of Margaret's descendants ever since. Whether she already knew John Macmillan is unknown, but only two months after her arrival in New South Wales, she married him and they settled at Williams River in the Hunter Valley.

John and Margaret continued to travel searching for farm land free from the devastating floods which ravaged coastal rivers. Finally, they too, were drawn to Woodford Island and they called their farm 'Kendram'. There, a daughter, Flora, was born in 1865. Margaret was an

indomitable figure and vividly remembered by her grandchildren as ruling the household from her seat in the kitchen and always dressing in black with a white 'mutch' as dictated by the fashion of the time.

With all these Highland families settling in the Clarence Valley close to the town of Maclean, one of the most Scottish towns in Australia, it was inevitable that marriages would take place within the Highland group. So it was that in 1896, Flora Macmillan married William Macgregor, the child who had arrived in Australia aged two, and thereby united four Highland families.

Among the Australian descendants of these families are a Commissioner of Railways, an opera singer, a comedienne, several newspaper editors, the first Commonwealth Public Service chief, a New Guinea explorer, a town Mayor, a shire clerk and numerous teachers.

Contact was maintained with the Scottish side of the family until the late 1920s. Towards the end of World War 1, an Australian MacLachlan soldier visited his MacInnes relations in Oban and Mull and a number of letters exist attesting to the continuing links.

The following is an extract from a newspaper cutting treasured by the Macgregor family for many years. It was written by K.W. Grant in the 'Oban Times' in 1910 and described a visit he made to the Clarence Valley:-

*"... I was told that a certain Mr William Macgregor was anxious that I should pay him a call. A drive up and down grassy woodland hills brought me to a substantial stone-built farm house situated at the top of a green slope that swept down to the water's edge. The glorious beauty of the view from the height on which we stood was a sight never to be forgotten. Wooded hills, green pastures and lake-like reaches of the brimming river, of which this was but the South Arm, made up such a prospect as many a patrician in the Old Country might well envy. It was the loveliest spot I have seen outside Scotland. Forty years before, it was virgin forest and Mr Macgregor with the aid of his family, had brought it to this! Mr Macgregor was at the foot of the slope looking after some hay which had been mowed but he was sent for, and meanwhile, his daughter, Miss Macgregor, received me with true Highland hospitality, to which was added the frank kindness of our New South Wales kinsfolk. When Mr Macgregor came up to the verandah on which we were seated, I rose to receive his greeting. He fixed his gaze on me as if he would look me through and through. After we were again seated, I turned to him and asked, "And what corner of the Old Country do you hail from?" "I was born in Appin," was the reply. I seized his hand and wrung it, exclaiming, "From Appin! Then I claim you as a friend for I was brought up in Appin. You are the first Appin man I have ever met in my wanderings."*

The Highland hospitality continues to the present day. Each Easter, there is a Highland Gathering in the town of Maclean and many folk of Scottish descent wear their tartan and participate in the Pipe Band competitions, athletics and Highland Dancing. They are very proud of their Highland blood and the achievements of their pioneering forebears.

1. Gaskell, Phillip. *Morvern Transformed*. Cambridge. U.P. 1968. p.23, 24.
2. Simpson, I.M.. *Pioneers of a Great Valley*. 1978. p.104.

