

Na Lìneachan Mòra

The Bynames, Genetics & Lore of Lewis

Issue 7: January 2024

Happy New Year!

I hope you've enjoyed a restful Christmas, and that the year ahead is a good one. I have enjoyed compiling this issue, but repeat my plea for any other articles - however short they may be - from you. Don't imagine that you have nothing worthwhile to contribute - it would be wonderful to include even the smallest story or scrap of an old song.

As ever, please let any friends who may be interested know about the journal.

Yours,

William



105 years

Contents

	Page
Mr John Macdonald of Little Bernera	3
The Financial Crash of 1897	3
Poor Law Records: Stornoway Parish	4-5
Lewis connections in Cheshire	5
The Herring Trade, 1859	6
Theft of trousers in North Tolsta, 1858	7
The Shipwrecked Mariner's Society, 1860	7
Families of Lewis: The Macleennans and Macleans	7-15

Images from historical newspapers are courtesy of
FindMyPast, © THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Mr John Macdonald of Little Bernera

In 1896, Dr Ross of Barvas was asked by his brother-in-law to send any information which was available on their family. [These notes](#) were then printed in 1902, and have been annotated by Rev. William Matheson. Matheson is not named, but his distinctive handwriting is readily identified.

Although we can hope that the National Library of Scotland will host this document at the same web address for a long time to come, it may be best to save your own copy if it is of interest.



The Financial Crash of 1897

The famine of the mid-19th century and the lack of crofting land for expanding families in the late 19th and early 20th centuries are well known. Perhaps we imagine that financial crashes are a product of the modern world, and could not have affected our ancestors, afflicted though they were by other issues.

The collapse of the Caledonian Bank affected towns and communities across the Highlands and Islands. The Inverness Courier (12 December 1897) reported the effect in Stornoway as follows:

STORNOWAY.

Coming so shortly after the stoppage of the City of Glasgow Bank, which had also a branch here, the result has proved most disastrous to the trading community in Stornoway and the neighbourhood. The principal business men in the place dealt with the Caledonian Bank, and the closing up of their banking facilities at this time of the year will be felt very much. The only bank now remaining in Stornoway is the National. Many of the depositors in the City Bank had gone to the Caledonian Bank, where, unfortunately, they have again had their means tied up. The stoppage will also tell very severely upon the fishing industries of the island, as at this time of the year most of the engagements for the incoming year are entered into, and advances made in cash and meal. The 5th of December will be long remembered in the Lews as the worst day that has dawned upon it during the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

The British Linen Company has arranged to open a branch at Stornoway. The agent is to be Mr Norman Maciver, late agent of the City of Glasgow Bank there.

It may be that your family has stories of the financial difficulties experienced at this time. If so, it would be good to hear of personal accounts which would illustrate the general problems mentioned in the article.

Poor Law Records: Stornoway Parish

The recent attack (see [here](#)) upon both the operational and backup servers belonging to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES) has resulted in some useful genealogical information becoming unavailable, at least in the short to medium-term. One of these items consists of four large ledgers which contain Poor Law records for the parish of Stornoway. I have been told that they will be made available again when that becomes possible. For the time being, please be aware that they exist. I imagine that it is still possible to view them by visiting Tasglann nan Eilean, the purpose-built archive attached to Stornoway Castle.

The four ledgers referred to are listed as follows:

- General Register of the Poor: 1849 - 1877
- General Register of the Poor: 1895 - 1905
- Register of Poor: 1849 - 1884
- Register of Poor: 1884 - 1895

Previous issues have referred to my interest in the Crichton family, and also those families who used the name of Torquil. Therefore this entry in the records is of interest to me and illustrates the usefulness of the records:

Name		<i>Torquil Crichton</i>	
Residence	<i>Swordale</i>	Wholly or Partially Disabled	<i>Wholly</i>
Age	<i>30</i>	Description of Disablement	<i>Heart Disease</i>
Date of Minute of Parochial Board or Committee admitting Liability and authorising Relief	<i>28th Oct. 1896.</i>	Wholly or Partially Destitute	<i>Partially</i>
Amount and Description of Relief authorised	<i>Aliment 1/6 per week and £3 towards roofing new house</i>	Earnings, Means, and Resources, besides Parochial Relief	<i>Assisted by Parents</i>
Country and Place of Birth, and, if in Scotland, Parish of Birth	<i>Stornoway</i>	Nature of Settlement	<i>Birth re.</i>
Religious Denomination, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic	<i>Prot</i>	Name and Age of Wife, Child or Children living in Family	<i>Wife Margaret Macdonald - 29 Anne Crichton ^{31/12/74} 1/2 mar Donald - born 28/10/77 Norman - " 19/2/1900 Jessie " 29/11/1902 Torquil " 30/7/07</i>
Condition—If Adult, whether Married or Single, Widow or Widower	<i>Married</i>	Name, Age, and Weekly Earnings of Husband, Wife, Child or Children not living in Family, and their Circumstances	
If Child, whether Orphan, Deserted, or separated from Parents.	<i>—</i>	Other Information not stated above	<i>Son of Donald Crichton Swordale.</i>
Trade or Occupation	<i>Fisherman</i>		

One imagines that Poor Law standards were sufficiently stringent to ensure that someone who could do any work at all would not be described as 'wholly disabled'. The heart disease which Torquil suffered from must have been debilitating, and it is probable that he would have struggled with the guilt of not providing for his family.

Torquil's parents apparently assisted him, meaning that he would have received a lower amount of relief, although in 1896 he did receive extra money towards the roofing of his new house.

This is a clear example of why it is so important to look beyond census records and birth / marriage / death certificates. This record provides us with a much better grasp of his struggles.

The record continues, showing alterations to the arrangements as they years progressed:

DATES.	Change of Circumstances and subsequent Proceedings.
1899.	
Apr. 26	Aliment increased to 2/6 per week - and allowed timber for partition for new house
Aug. 28	Aliment increased to 4/- per week
1908 Apr. 29	" " " 5/- " "
10 April 27	Allowed a bedstead, and house repairs 12/-
Nov 28	Died this date

The amount of money provided went up, probably because his parents were less able to assist him - we know from death records that his father Donald died in 1897. As Torquil neared the end of his life he was granted a bedstead as well as further repairs to his home. He passed away in 1910, aged just 44.

Torquil	1910	H.	H.	Donald Erickson	Phillips's Palace Hotel	Alexander Erickson	1910
Erickson	November		years	Brother			November 28 th
	Seventy, sixth			(deceased)		Brother	At Stornoway
Diolman	5 h. 5 m. P.M.				As cert. by		
				Anne Erickson	Phosfor Halliday	11 Woodale, Stornoway	John Macleod
(Married to Margaret Macdonald)	Woodale, Stornoway			M. S. Mackenzie	M.O. & G.O.		Registrar
						(Present)	

The death certificate shows that the main cause of death was tuberculosis; without the Poor Law record we would have no understanding of the difficulties of the previous fifteen or twenty years.

Lewis connections in Cheshire

The following snippet points to an English civil registration record which may be of interest. English (and Welsh) records can be ordered from the [General Register Office](#).

DEATHS.

On Saturday, the 10th inst., at Seacombe, Cheshire, Jean, widow of Mr Murdo Macleod, Merchant, Stornoway.

John o' Groat Journal
23 May 1851

The death record referred to here can be purchased as a digital image for £2.50 - it is recorded in the index under: Jane Mcleod, Q2 1851, Wirral, Vol 19, Page 279

THE HERRING TRADE.

WICK, June 1.—We have no later accounts from the Lewis than is furnished in the following report from our correspondent, which gives a more moderate account of the success than was conveyed by steamer which arrived here on Thursday last for empty barrels. It is reported that the boats were prevented by a gale of wind from prosecuting the fishing at the end of last week :—

“STORNOWAY, May 26.—The fishing has been steadily followed after since last writing. Annexed is a statement of the daily take :—

May 18,...	Boats out, 170 ;	highest, 4 ;	average, $\frac{1}{2}$ crans
” 19,...	” 180 ;	” 35 ;	” 2 ”
” 20,...	” 200 ;	” 31 ;	” $6\frac{1}{2}$ ”
” 21,...	” 200 ;	” 26 ;	” 5 ”
” 24,...	” 200 ;	” 28 ;	” $3\frac{1}{2}$ ”
” 25,...	” 200 ;	” 39 ;	” 5 ”
” 26,...	” 200 ;	” 18 ;	” $2\frac{1}{2}$ ”

The fishing to-day was light and rather partial. Several of the West Coast crews have fished their complement, viz., 100 crans. The average for the season over 200 boats is 35 crans. The number of boats fishing at Lewis is about 450, which includes those at the out-stations of Holm, Knock, Bayble, Portnaguron, Greece, Carloway, Scalpa, Lochshell, Marwick, Cromore, Crossbost, and Karnish. The greater part of the boats at these stations have done but little as yet. There is one Irish smack buying herrings (fresh) this morning. Vessels and boats continue to arrive daily with stock.”

Several small crafts are now loading barrels and salt for Stornoway. Upwards of six thousand empty barrels have been sent off from this port since our last publication. The first few barrels of Lewis herrings that were dispatched to the continent this season brought a high figure, but the latest accounts are said to be equal to about 32s per barrel. The quantity caught this season, though not leaving an average for the whole fleet of much over 25 crans per boat, is about a third more than last year's entire take. It, however, was unprecedentedly small. The take this year may be about half an average fishing, but there is a month of the season yet to run. The quality of the fish is improving daily.

The first trial with nets for the season was made at Wick on Tuesday evening, when there were caught a few hundred herrings. Appearances are good, and the fishermen expect a fair fishing this season.

THEFT, &c.

Murdo Mackay was charged with stealing a pair of trousers from a fishing-hut or bothy, near the curing-house at Garve, on the farm of North Tolsta, in the parish of Stornoway, occupied by Mr Roderick Nicolson, shipowner, Stornoway—the bothy being occupied at the time of the theft by Allan Murray, fisherman, and the trousers being his property. The charge was aggravated by a previous conviction of theft. He pleaded guilty to all the charges except that of being habit and repute a thief.

On this point John Macquarrie, sheriff-officer in Stornoway, and Donald Macdonald, tenant and farm-constable at South Tolsta, were examined, and testified that for the last seven years he bore the character libelled.

A verdict of guilty having been returned, the Court pronounced sentence of four years' penal servitude.

Inverness Advertiser, 5 October 1858

STORNOWAY.

Feb. 1, 1860.

The Shipwrecked Mariners' Society has kindly awarded, through their agent here (Mr Gillis), the sum of £7 6d. 3d. to the widow of William M'Leod, late fisherman at Bayble, who lost his life on the 16th ult., off Chicken Head, Lewis, whilst in pursuit of his calling; also the sum of £2 3s. 0d. to a widow, being her third annual grant; £4 7s. 6d. between two crews of fishermen whose boats were damaged lately at Bayble and Portnagaron. The first named case is worthy of notice to all sea-faring people. The deceased had only been a member for six weeks, and leaves a widow and five young children in a truly destitute condition, and the relief now afforded by this valuable Institution in the hour of need is certainly very handsome, and ought to induce all sailors and fishermen to become subscribers.

The Banffshire Journal, 7 February 1860

Families of Lewis

This series continues with four articles (printed in 1951) on the Macleennans and Macleans.

Please see page 9 of the April 2023 issue for the acknowledgements due to various individuals and organisations. If an as-yet-unpublished article is of particular interest to you, please submit a short piece of your own and I will see what I can do for you!

MACLENNANS—I.

The ancestor of the Lewis Macleannan was one of several immigrants from the mainland of Ross-shire who settled in Lewis about the middle of the 17th century. He belonged to a family designated "Cleireach," a term the meaning of which has been discussed in a previous article. In the Applecross Genealogy, written in 1669, he is called "John Clerk in Lewis," and at that time other members of the same family seem to have styled themselves Clerk rather than Macleannan.

The first of them of whom we have any knowledge is Donald Clerk, who flourished about the middle of the 16th century, and had a daughter married to John Mackenzie, of Corrie. In the next generation Rorie Clerk married a daughter of Murdo Mackenzie, third of Achilty, and had a daughter who was the wife of Kenneth Mackenzie, of the Davochmoluag family. Evidently in the following generation we have "Murdo Clerk in Lochbroom," who married a daughter of Kenneth Mackenzie, also of the Davochmoluag family. Somewhat later there are several ministers of the name of Clerk, including the Rev. Farquhar Clerk, who graduated at St. Andrews in 1626, and was the first Protestant incumbent of the Parish of Stornoway.

The Clerks of Lochbroom

I.—John Clerk or Macleannan was known patronymically as [redacted]

[redacted] Iain mac [redacted] Chleirich, and therefore he may have been a son of the above [redacted] Clerk [redacted]

[redacted]

The Lewis account of John Macleannan is that he came from Kintail, but this may be a guess based on the fact that Kintail was the old home of the Macleennans. According to the same tradition, John Macleannan was tacksman of Kirkibost in Bernera, and he is credited with the usual three sons, of whom only one is named, [redacted] but the number of Macleennans on record in the following generation suggests that three may be too conservative an estimate. John Macleannan was married with issue.

(1) Murdo, of whom below. He is the only son whose name is definitely known, but the following, who appear as tacksmen in the next generation, were also probably sons of John Macleannan:

c. 1550-? Donald was I bear chair, Reader and minister of Lochbroom 1574-1613.

c. 1580- first h

c. 1610-

- 1636. Murdo Macleannan, minister of Spawdock.
- 1641-22. Allan Clerk, minister of Spawdock. Issue: Rorie; Donald, minister of Fern; Iain.
- 1614-34. Donald Clerk, minister of Spawdock. M.A. 1606. Issue: Rorie, studied at St. Andrews 1642; John (m. d. of John Mackenzie of Ord); Christian (m. in 1631 Murdo Matheson in above), minister of Spawdock (Dunrobin Papers).

c. 1600-

c. 1630-

of Ruairidh [redacted] Rorie/ who is on record in 1635 as "i.e. Achata donis" Lochbroom, Bernera; Allan x Spawdock. Notes II. 61-62.

were tacksmen of Little Bernera and Croir.

at the same time as him/

Celtic Magazine X Cf. [redacted], X. 227; Faith, VII. 156. Mackenzies, 513 Mackenzies of Balona, 115

x See Mac Kenzie of Balona, 118; Original Papers of Rev. [redacted], 194.

x? Minister of Lochbroom in 1656, and father of Rev. Farquhar Macleannan, Steath, who m. Margaret Mac Kenzie, with issue Anna, who married James, brother of John Mac Kenzie of Ord.

x Donald Macleannan, a priest, was probably a son. See GN IX. 87; TGS I XLIV. 99. Cf. Tascher, No. 25, p. 49.

27

27

(2) Alexander, on record as tacksman of Bosta in 1704. When Martin Martin visited Lewis prior to the publication in 1703 of his "Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," Alexander MacIennan was one of those who gave him information. He told him of an extraordinarily low ebb, that had exposed about forty yards of a stone wall built parallel with the opposite coast of Lewis, of which no one then living could give any account. It is probably the same Alexander MacIennan who was one of the tacksmen of Little Bernera in 1726.

h. 15.

in 1759 - Duncan M^r Em
son (HP, 32)

h. He had a son John, who had a son Duncan (Donnchadh mac Iain mhic Alastair), tenant in Tolata Chalais in 1766 and 1780, who was followed as tenant (1787, 1823) by John MacIennan of his son.

1718 and h

John Ben Mac Farquhar (alias Mac Arthur!) tenant in Bosta, 1766, 1780, 1787.
Angus Mac Arthur tenant in Bosta in 1766.
Malcolm Mac Arthur tenant in Bosta in 1766.

(3) Farquhar, one of the tacksmen of Little Bernera in 1726.

(4) Roderick, tacksman of Kneep, in Uig, in 1728 and 1718 and 1726. John MacIennan also had the following daughters:

(5) Annabella (Barabal), who married the ancestor of the Smiths of Earshader. According to one account this was Farquhar, grandfather of Farquhar Smith, who was tacksman of Earshader in 1823, but the chronology will scarcely admit of this, and it is more probable that she was the wife of the first-mentioned Farquhar's father, whose name was Gille-padruig. Farquhar, which is a MacIennan name, would then be accounted for as having come in [redacted] of [redacted] marriage.

x General Notes II. 63.
and [redacted] Kenneth MacIennan (Chalmers) had a son John who was the father of Kenneth MacIennan, merchant in Stornoway (p. 85).
John MacIennan (Iain mac Alastair) has two daughters,

A daughter/

(6) Isobel, who married Colin, son of the Chamberlain of Lewis, Murdo Mackenzie of the Davochmoluag family, with issue a son John (Iain Ruadh), tacksman of Batallan.

by reason of this [redacted] one the wife of [redacted] Mille Ben Garsin, and the other the wife of Donald Chalmers (Mac Arthur).

(7) A daughter, who married Angus Nicolson, tacksman of Kirivig, of whom in a previous article.

SC 6/4/51
(To be continued.)

MacIennans (2)

II. - Murdo MacIennan was tacksman of Hacleto in 1726. According to tradition, however, he was at one time in Little Bernera, along with one of his brothers, while a third brother was in possession of Croir. There was a quarrel between the two brothers in Little Bernera, in consequence of which the other brother's wife, who belonged to Ness, prevailed upon her husband to remove from Bernera to her native place. The removal was effected by sea, and while he was going to Ness with a cargo of barley, he was driven off his course by a storm and given up for lost. Many years afterwards, however, a Stornoway shipmaster met him in Gothenburg, and received from him a stocking full of gold pieces to take back to Lewis and give to his brother Murdo.

joint-
with John MacLeod
1718, and of Bosta in 1726.
(Croir must have been part of this tack, for it is not otherwise entered in the early rentals.)

Murdo MacIennan and his brothers acted as the gaolers of the priest Cornelius Con, a doctor of the Sorbonne, who was condemned to solitary confinement on the island of Flodda in Loch Roag after having

x Hist. MSS. Comm., 12th Report, App. VIII, h. 55; GN V. 178-9; VIII. 12; IX. 87.

(8) Mary, who married John Campbell (Iain Og), tacksman of Scalpay, with issue.
(9) A daughter, who married John MacArthur, tacksman of Kildalost, with issue a son Angus, who was deprived of the lands of Kildalost. He is described as a cousin of Kenneth Campbell of Scalpay.

* Reference to his case in PC papers in Blair Castle (also. Univ. for. Spring 1957, p. 14 - Article by A. M. A. Stephen.)

incurred the displeasure of George Mackenzie of Kildun. The prisoner's final fate is uncertain. This was in the last decade of the 17th century.

The Chamberlain's Rule

Murdo MacLennan appears to have left Bernera in the latter part of his life, for it is probably he who is on record as tacksman of Laimshader in 1740.

He had issue at least two sons:
(1) Duncan, of whom below.
(2) William, who appears as joint tacksman, with his brother, of Berve and Kneep in 1754 and 1766. In the latter year he "binds himself to continue his Mother in possession of her present share of her farm during this lease, and in the event of her death he is hereby entitled to one half of the whole farm." William MacLennan had a son, whose name we do not know. He mentions him in a letter to the Chamberlain of Lewis, dated at Berve, 25th March, 1771, in which he apologises for having sent him to school in Bernera without the Chamberlain's permission - which leaves no doubt as to whose word was law in Lewis in those days.

III.—Duncan MacLennan was joint tacksman of Berve and Kneep, first with his brother William, and latterly (1780 and 1787) with his son Donald. He had at least two sons:

- (1) Donald, of whom below.
- (2) Roderick, on record as tacksman of Habost (Lochs) in 1771, and of Garrabost in 1781. But he apparently continued to have interests in Lochs, for he obtained a tack of Altinish (between Habost and Laxay) in 1780. This tack was renewed to him and his son in 1787. The son was Murdo, born in 1755, and it is apparently he who, also in 1787, was given a tack of Vallamus.

IV.—Donald MacLennan was tacksman of Berve and Kneep. A letter of his is extant, dated at Berve, 3rd March, 1771, in which he excuses himself from attending a court in Stornoway on the ground that he is going in a boat to North Uist to sell horses. Donald MacLennan married a daughter of Alan ~~son of~~ ~~Croby~~, Lochs. We have no details of his family, except that a daughter Ann^r married, as his second wife, Donald MacDonald, tacksman of ~~Dochniff~~, father of John MacDonald (Domhnallach a' Chaolais), who is said to have been the prototype of the "King of Borva" in William Black's novel "A Princess of Thule."

Further Information Wanted

We should like to hear from readers who have any further information about Donald MacLennan's family and descendants. There are indications that he left male issue. For example, according to a rental of 1823, Berve and Reef was then in possession of "John McLenan and others." Was this John MacLennan a son of the above Donald MacLennan? It is also of interest to note,

Murdo M^c Ean vic Curline, tenant in Borta in 1766, 1780, 1787.
August M^c Curline vic Ean vic Curline tenant there in 1780, 1787.
Donald Bain MacLennan tenant there in 1780, 1780 (? Donald M^c Ean in 1766).

Emigrated to North Carolina in 1773? (GN X.9)

x General Notes I. 15.

l.c. 1732

x General Notes V. 9.

Became tacksman of Garrabost [apparently] in 1775. Dispute with son Curline over Habost, which latter subject to August Smith. General Notes V. 9.

Murdo MacLennan died in 1788-9. He married, as her first husband, ~~Anna, d. of Allan Mackenzie, tacksman of Crossbest~~ ~~(Small Court, County of Lewis)~~. In 1823, Roderick MacLennan, who

GN IX. 22.

looks like a son of Murdo, was one of two tenants in Altinish. Donald MacLennan (sic) was tacksman of Habost in 1831. (General Notes, p. 15) 35. He had a son John, mentioned in Appendix: 1831 (Genl., 24).

(Antoin ~~son of~~), Mackenzie, tacksman of Ranish in 1777.

Donald MacLennan, of Berve, Uig, a subscriber to 1799 edition of D. Bain and was the mother (GN VIII. 171)

stat. Catherine MacLennan, probably mother of daughter of Donald, married ~~James Smith, tacksman of~~ ~~Dochniff~~

x Roderick of Habost had a nephew Donald in 1771 (General Notes III. 145.)

But he was removed from there about 1742. (GN VIII. 70.)

+ Cf. GN X. 9.

h See also General Notes IV. 48, 51.

x His wife was Margaret MacAulay (GN IX. 15) h 1769 and (General Notes IV. 48)

at the mouth of Loch Shell / P
A Roderick MacLennan who had Altinish was known as Ruairidh M^c Ean. He had a daughter about whom there was a song - "Mighbean Bhuidhe Ailtinis." (GN VIII. 82)

x General Notes I. 19.

x Also daughter Catherine? (Families of Lewis, 88). Little Bernera

Donald MacLennan's
After his death, his widow apparently and probably a daughter lived at Kneep, to judge from an entry in a list of the inhabitants of Uig dated c. 1819.

in this connection, that the present tenant of Berve is a Maclennan.

There are some Maclennans in Uig whose connection, if any, with this family is not apparent. The ancestry of the late Rev. Malcolm Maclennan, D.D., for example, can be traced back for several generations to Iain mac Aonghuis, who is on record as tenant in Valtos at various dates between 1766 and 1787. *h*

Ruairidh

Not all the Maclennans in Lewis are descended from Iain mac ~~Murchaidh~~ Chleirich. There is an old tribe in Ness and elsewhere, of whom an account may be given in a future article, whose surname in Gaelic is Mac Gill-eadharain. *Some* of them now pass as Campbells, but others, in virtue of a certain similarity of sound, have called themselves Maclennan.

Some

some of h

It may be well, also, to note that the Harris Maclennans are quite different. Their name is in Gaelic Mac Laghmain (with the vowels pronounced exactly as in "tamait"). This name, derived from the Norse Lagman, has in most places been anglicised as Lamont. *SC-13/4/5A*

*It might be supposed that these Maclennans are the descendants of Rodrick MacLennan, tradesman of ~~Uig~~ ^{Uig}, but, if so, it is strange that the typical Maclennan names - Rodricks, Forquhar, and Duncan - are conspicuous by their absence. *h**

MACLEANS (1)

There appear to be several different kinds of Macleans in Lewis. Those with whom we are concerned in this article are descended from Iain Dubh, who made his appearance in the Island about the end of the 17th century. We do not know to what branch of the Maclean clan he belonged.

The account now current among his descendants is that he came from Mull, and that his mission was to impart his skill as a fisherman to the inhabitants of the west coast of Lewis. It is a fact that the fisheries of Loch Roag were greatly developed in the 17th century, and that the islesmen of Argyll knew more about the business at that time than their northern neighbours of Skye and the Outer Hebrides.

A Ready Tongue

It is said that Iain Dubh was a man of nimble mind and ready tongue. For this reason he was a favourite of William, 5th Earl of Seaforth, who was something of a wit and poet, like his father Coinneach Og, and found in the fisherman from Mull a foeman worthy of his steel. On one occasion Iain Dubh was crossing the moor from Stornoway to his home at Tolsta Chaolais, when he encountered the Earl and another gentleman. He happened to be carrying on his head an iron pot of which he had become possessor in town.

The Earl greeted him with the following poetic sally:

Thainig oirnne thar muir a nall
Eoin fiadhaich air sgadan cuain
A Muile, 's ge fada thall,
B'olc an dream, dhaibh bu dual.
An alcag a Braigh a' Chaolais,
Caobaidh i fear a h-araich,
Asgartach nan daoine baatha
Aircleach, aoireach, mi-narach.

To which Seaforth's companion added:

A' phoit dhona gun ro-fheum,
B'fhearr a ceannach air an fheill,
'S ge h-uallach foidhe do cheum,
Cha d'fhuair thu i reisd gun toibheum.

Iain Dubh was fully equal to the occasion, and forthwith made reply:

'S cubhaidh do gach saoi nach socrach
Bhith 'na fhulangach sar-fhoclach,
'S buinidh a dh'fhear bhios 'na airc
Bhith 'n eiseamail fear dh'a chomhnadh.
'S gilide am bord a' chailc,
Cha mhisde a' chruaidh a h-aghart,
Eiseamail is tu san airc
Cha taiside do laoch a tabhairt. x

Came From Mull

Seaforth's first verse, in which there appears to be a pun on the word "Eoin," confirms the tradition as to Iain Dubh's place of origin and the purpose of his coming to Lewis, unless it be that the tradition derives from it. In any case, the verse must be regarded as fairly strong evidence that Iain Dubh did come from Mull. His first place of abode in Lewis was apparently Tolsta Chaolais, but in his latter years it is believed that he lived in Uig, obtaining lands from the minister of the parish, the Rev. John MacLeod.

x Cf. O'Rahilly, *Danphrosail*, No. 60;
Mushagan MS. No. 98.

(Maighstir Seon). 1

I.—Iain Dubh may have been married twice, for there is a considerable gap between the older and younger members of his family. He had a large family of sons, and this propensity for numerous male issue distinguished most of the succeeding generations, so that to trace all his progeny in Lewis would be a formidable task. We must here content ourselves with a particular account of the descendants of one son—Gillepara mac Iain Dubh. In the case of other sons we can only at most indicate their descendants in a general way and mention one or two outstanding individuals.

Iain Dubh's Sons

According to tradition, Iain Dubh's sons were as follows:

(1) Murdo, who had issue (1a) John, (tenant in Erista at various dates between 1766 and 1787; (2a) Norman (Tormod Ban), married with issue a number of daughters and a son Malcolm, whose son Norman (Tormod Chalum) lived in Borve; (3a) Angus, who emigrated to North Carolina in 1772, and was the ancestor of Angus Wilton Maclean, Governor of North Carolina about thirty years ago; (4a) Catherine, who married Norman MacDonald (Tormod mac Dhomhnaill mhic Thor-moid), Erista; (5a) Christina, married with issue. (6a) John.

(2) Angus, who was born in 1705. He was a tenant of the Rev. John MacLeod in Baile na Cille from 1735 to 1744, in which year he removed to Cliff, another of the townlands of Uig then held by the parish minister. He was tenant in Mangersta in 1780 and 1787. He had a son Donald, tenant in Mangersta at the same dates.

According to tradition, he also had a son who became mentally deranged as the result of a fever, and was known in Uig as "Amadan Aonghuis mhic Iain Duibh."

He remained in this condition for thirteen years, at the end of which time he wandered away from home unnoticed and died of exposure in the hills, his body being recovered seven months afterwards.

We do not know who are the present descendants of Aonghus mac Iain Duibh, but the family known in Uig as "Na Saoir Dhubha" came originally from Mangersta, and therefore must have been descended either from this Angus or from his brother Donald. Of this family was the late Stephen Maclean, LL.B.

(3) Donald, tenant in Mangersta at various dates between 1766 and 1787. He left issue (1a) John, tenant in 1766 in Lower Barvas, where there are Macleans presumably descended from him; (2a) Angus, tenant in Mangersta in 1787, whose descendants can be traced in Uig and other parts of Lewis.

L (born 1727)

(line of male desc. F. Maclean - 1776)

* This John (John O.) migrated with his father to Shrewsbury, and his descendants are at Shrewsbury. He was a member of the 78th Highland Regt. He had a son Murdo, great-grandfather of Dr Murdo Maclean, Surgeon. (See General Notes I. 70, 74.)

(An Saor Duibh)

* They are "Clann Aonghus mhic Chaluim Shaoir mhic Dhomhnaill mhic Dhomhnaill mhic Iain Duibh." (General Notes, IV. 37) Donald

xx He had a son, who m. Ann, d. of Malcolm Mac Aulay (Calum mac Dhuighlaill), with issue, at least four sons - Calum Saor, Murchadh Saor, Tormod Ruadh, and Aonghus Ruadh. Donald, son of Murchadh Saor, m. Peggy, d. of John Mac Aulay (Iain Buidhe), (General Notes, IV. 37-38)

ik

He also had a son Norman (GN I. 208)

1805/

L tenant in Baile na Cille

humberville

x to Maglean grandfater of Murdo Maclean, Constable. (But see General Notes, III)

1776-1791 (General Coll. III. 42, 53.) and 1780 at an earlier date (1766) he is recorded as tenant in Upper Shadar. He had a son who m. Calum Saor, h incapacitated (below)

His father was Murchadh Boidh mhic Chalum (an-t-Saor) mhic Aonghus (An Saor Duibh) mhic Chalum Shaoir mhic Dhomhnaill mhic Dhomhnaill mhic Iain Duibh.

1752/

x He had a son Malcolm (1780, 1787, 1792) who was followed by John Maclean, probably his son, tenant there in 1823.

(For marriage & issue see General Notes, IV. 145)

9 Aug 1763 (HP, 34)

* At Mangersta, had son in Army named Iain Ruadh, who was blinded at Bonetta (General Notes, II. 18) I. 37

One of Angus' descendants worthy of mention is his grandson Donald (Domhnall mac Choinnich), who lived at Kneep, and was one of the old soldiers of Uig. He fought in Egypt in the campaign of 1807, and was among those taken prisoner at El Hamet, nearly losing his head because the Turkish commander barbarously offered a reward of so many piastres for the head of every British soldier brought to him. Though he escaped execution, many of his comrades did not, and his captors forced him to carry their heads, an ordeal which is said to have turned his hair pure white, though he was but a youth at the time.

SC 25/5/51

(To be concluded).

MACLEANS—(II)

It should perhaps here be noted that there are reasons for suspecting that Uig genealogists have fallen into some confusion as between Aonghus mac Iain Duibh and Aonghus mac Dhomhnaill mhic Iain Duibh. Thus, for example, it is rather surprising to find a Maclean of the fifth generation figuring as a soldier as far back as 1807, and we have to reckon with the possibility that the above Domhnall mac Choinnich is to be correctly identified as a grandson of Aonghus mac Iain Duibh, and one of the fourth generation of Lewis Macleans.

(4) Peter (Gille-padruig), of whom below.

(5) John, of whom nothing is known, unless it be he who appears on record in Stornoway in 1728 as "John McEan Duy." It may be noted further that in 1768 John Maclean is on record as Kirk Officer in Stornoway.

In addition to the above sons spoken of by tradition, there is evidence to suggest that Iain Dubh had at least one other son:

(6) Norman. At any rate, there was a "Normand Mac Ean dowie" residing in Baile na Cille in 1773. In and about that year there was a considerable movement of population in Lewis, and some Uig families migrated to Lochs. It is therefore possible that this Norman is to be identified with Norman Maclean who is recorded in 1774 as tenant in Balallan.

II.—Peter Maclean lived in Ardroll, and was a tenant of John Nicolson, tacksman of Carnish. He married, first, Ann, daughter of John Mackenzie (Iain Ruadh), tacksman of Balallan, with issue:

(1) Kenneth, of whom below.

King Of Reef

(2) Colin, who lived at Carn a' Ghobhainn in Reef, and was known as "Righ na Riofa." He married Ann, daughter of Angus MacIver (Aonghus Og a bu shine), with issue, Angus, John, Peter, Murdo, and at least one daughter, Peggy, who married Malcolm, son of John MacAulay (Iain Buidhe), Valtos. There are many Macleans in Lewis who trace their ancestry to the "King of Reef."

(3) Catherine.

Peter Maclean married for a second time, with issue:

(4) Murdo and (5) Malcolm, one of whom may have been the father of Donald Maclean, described as a cousin of the Rev. Peter Maclean, who emigrated from Eneclate Uig, to Canada in 1851, and died at Gisle, Compton County, Quebec, in 1902, at the age of one hundred years.

We know from other sources that Peter Maclean also had a son, probably of his first marriage, named

* General Notes, I. 20; (?) V. 8.
Balallan
* Cf. John Maclean, (GN V. 92).
* General Notes, I. 14.

* She, or another daughter, married Angus MacLeod (Aonghus Ruadh), ancestor of a family of MacLeods at Lochs.

* Murdo Maclean - Eneclate c. 1824.

* Cf. GN V. 93, 96; letter from him in Crofton's Comm. Report, app. 164.

of
"I

(6) John (Iain Ban), who lived at Toraidh on the Lewis side of Loch Resori, which was annexed as a pendicle to Ardrol in 1780. He married Catherine MacLeod, who belonged to a South Harris family known as "Na Garnaileirean" with issue, Donald, Malcolm, John and Finlay. Malcolm had a son, Donald, who married Catherine MacLeod (of "Sliochd Alasdair Ruaidh"), and was the father of the Rev. Allan S. Maclean, Bettyhill, and the grandfather of the Rev. Malcolm Maclean, Cononbridge. Most of the Macleans to be met with in Scarp and elsewhere in Harris are the descendants of Iain Ban of Toraidh.

half of married Margaret MacLeod, and (1787-1267)

Daughter Ann m. Neil Morrison (Niall mac Dhombhaill 'ic Neill'), Tarasay (Genealogies, 100).

had who married Catherine MacLeod, of a South Harris family known as "Na Garnaileirean".

Information Wanted

It has also been stated that Peter Maclean had a son, Roderick, who settled in Luerbost, and was the ancestor of the late Rev. Kenneth S. Maclean, Tobermory, whose father was Alasdair mac Iain mhic Ruairidh. Further information on this point is desirable.

(7)

1796 (GN IX.17)

who had a brother Ruairidh Iain Ruairidh? (Life and Work 12/76).

as a sub tenant of his cousin, Allan MacKenzie, x of General Notes I.20.

III.—Kenneth Maclean lived in Balnucol. The site of his house is still known. It was always easily identified, being built next to an enormous boulder which must have almost overshadowed it. He married Ann (Anna Ruadh), daughter of Donald MacAulay (Domhnall Og na Buaille Chlach), Kneep, with issue:

- (1) Rev. Peter, of whom below.
- (2) Malcolm, who lived in Capadale, and had a trading vessel in which he made voyages to ports in the Baltic and elsewhere. For a time he was in partnership with Norman Matheson (Tormod Beag), Carnish. He married (17th February, 1825) Christina, daughter of John MacAulay (Iain Buidhe), Valtos, and had a large family. We may note among grandchildren now living Mr John Maclean, Crowlista, and his brother, Mr Roderick Maclean, Post Office, Timsgarry. Mr John Maclean, in addition to his many other attributes, is a remarkably well-informed and accurate genealogist.
- (3) Margaret; (4) Catherine; (5) Ann.

Rev. Peter Maclean

IV.—The Rev. Peter Maclean was born in May, 1800. He was in business in Stornoway before studying for the ministry. After being ordained he was for a number of years a minister in Cape Breton. Returning to Scotland, he joined the Free Church in 1843 and was settled in Tobermory. Twelve years later he came to Stornoway, where he died in 1868. Among published accounts of him is one (with portrait) in "Disruption Worthies of the Highlands." The Rev. Peter Maclean married (12th August, 1843) Flora, daughter of Colonel Campbell of Knock in Mull, with issue, Peter, Kenneth, Anne, Jean, and Margaret. Of the sons, only Kenneth left male issue, including Peter and Allan, now living in London and Eastbourne.

x General Notes II.55.

x Elegies in Bardachd Beathanais, 259-261

(Coirneal a' Chnais),

x See further General Notes II. 108-9.

x See Celtic Monthly VII. 201.

John

Iain Dubh is well represented all over Lewis and Harris by Macleans mostly of the seventh and eighth generations. It is probable, however, that there are other Macleans whose history in Lewis goes back just as far. In 1778, for example, one of the tenants in Back was Neil Maclean, and he may have left posterity. Others of the name are to be found in Lochs, Callernish and Brenish, and we are informed that their ancestry is traced back to Kenneth Maclean, who, some time in the 18th century, migrated to Lochs from Applecross. In this connection it may be noted that there is a Kenneth Maclean on record in 1774 as tenant in Balallan.

Terms & Conditions for submissions

- 1) There is no fee to be paid at any point.
- 2) Submissions may be of any length and should be emailed to cummingwj@hotmail.com.
A fifty-word piece of oral history is as welcome as a ten-thousand word essay.
- 3) Copyright remains with the submitter.
- 4) Submissions should be submitted as Word documents. These may be edited for formatting, but will otherwise be published as submitted. Images should be submitted as high resolution .png or .jpg files. If the compiler believes that there are issues to be concerned about, these must be resolved before publication.
- 5) In making a submission, the submitter is stating that there are no copyright issues. If that is later found to be incorrect then the submitter is liable, rather than the compiler of the journal. In particular, the work done by Bill and Chris Lawson of *Seallam!* may not be quoted at any length. Instead the work referred to should be cited so that the reader can refer to the original text.
- 6) All submissions must relate to a family which lived in Lewis prior to the year 1900.
This could be a fairly tenuous link; for example, if a Raasay tradition has a Lewis connection this would be very welcome.
- 7) Where a tradition is known in the original Gaelic, please provide the original, but also translate the text for the benefit of those of us who, sadly, do not speak the language.
- 8) It is inevitable that submissions will sometimes contain errors.
These may be corrected by the submitter or politely challenged by others in future issues.
- 9) Submissions relating to DNA testing must have received consent from the individual whose DNA was tested. Individuals other than the submitter must not be identifiable, unless it can be confirmed that specific permission has been granted by those other individuals.

These conditions will be updated from time to time.

Please email me (cummingwj@hotmail.com) if you would like to be notified when a new issue is published.