

Na Lìneachan Mòra

The Bynames, Genetics & Lore of Lewis

Issue 10: April 2025

Dear All,

When this journal was started, the aim was to have one issue every quarter. However, a mixture of work, long COVID (again), and a large commission for my little business have all meant that this has had to take a considerable back seat. I suspect that this will continue; I do intend to continue but issues will not be quarterly from now on — instead they will be when I have both time and material. The former is outwith my control, but you can help with the latter!

In this issue, the 'Families of Lewis' series continues with Matheson's articles on the MacLeods of Garrabost and the MacLeods of Hacklete. The former family are also considered in a booklet I wrote during lockdown, and so I reproduce it here (with the original page numbering), but without the introduction or fairly lengthy appendices. It is [available](#) as a PDF.

In the next issue I hope to begin serialising an old typescript discovered by Andrew P. MacLeod. It is entitled, "Second Sight and Prophecy" and was written by A. J. MacKenzie. This should prove to be a most interesting document, and grateful thanks are given to Andrew who has made it freely available to me, and therefore to you.

Best wishes,

William



The contents are, sadly, long gone, but this envelope was posted from Miavaig to the 'lawier' Napier Campbell in 1876. He had arrived in Stornoway in 1863; the Napier Commission was not named for him, but rather for Francis Napier.

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The 'Bonney' letters

Please see Issue 8 for the introduction to this series.

16 Spothwood Road
Edinburgh May 10th
1912
Mrs M. C. Macleod
J. J. Macleod Esq
Dear Cousin. I am
writing you now to inform
you that your ^{late} cousin
alive yet - Larrie & the
daughter of the late Thomas
Macleod eldest brother of your
father & of Mrs Byrne who
of Westfield Preston Pans
I am an old lady & as the
eldest alive of my late
father

fatherly was David & Macleod
he was very clever & as he
was educated for the medical
profession had a commission
presented to him in the
H. to L. & C. & passed as a
surgeon when he was only
18 years of age. George
Batham & the house student
of the Edinburgh University
nearly 250 years ago. He
J. J. Macleod was & passed as
a clerk or other clerical position
when he was only some years
of age he lost his father
& when he came back from
the University of his father

are the only full London
I have remaining on
Edinburgh there is a class
Macleod Society & the
near branch is in Edinburgh
They are anxious to have
all Macleod join it at
home & abroad on receipt
of a reply to this letter
I will send you a list
of the Club & a report of the
Committee with kind regards to you
as I heard much about you
when you & your wife were
young & residing in the
city of Edinburgh & if you
are

family. I suppose that
Mrs Thompson will have
informed you of the death
of John to the late Mrs Byrne
youngest daughter. He came
to England to see her daughter
& after her arrival in Edinburgh
died quite suddenly & is en-
-sured at Preston Pans.
Cemetery beside his father
& mother & sister. There were
three brothers of your late father
family & your late
brother was called for
is his father & the name
of the youngest of the three
brothers of your late father

he was up to the university from
that had an old man then
but anyway in it he was found
some time of the fact of his
death he had cried himself
to sleep & at his feet were
found the principal part of the
unwritten poem & when I saw
it he added those lines in
he added to his youth at the
time of his loss & added the
poem at the bottom & enclosed
you two copies one for you
I am sorry for yourself may
give it to you & I will tell him
about his clever uncle. Give
me some description of your
own family as you & John
Macleod Byrne & Mrs
Thompson

Queen of the Lyonesse he
with remembrance one
& my late sister who
died 4 years ago in
Edinburgh
I suppose I hear from
you as soon as
possible when I will
send you the Club's brochure
& the report of the class
Macleod Society in
Edinburgh
Yours affectionately
Cousin
Mary C. Macleod
1912
10 17 1912
1047

26 Spottiswood Road
Edinburgh May 18th
1912

Miss M C Macleod
To T Macleod Esq
Dear Cousin. I am
writing you now to inform
you that you ^{have} two cousins
alive yet ladies & the
daughters of the late Norman
Macleod eldest brother of your
father & of M^{rs} Syme late
of Northfield Prestonpans
I am an old lady & as the
eldest alive of my late
fathers

family. I suppose that
M^{rs} Thompson will have
informed you of the death
of M^{rs} C M Orr, M^{rs} Symes
youngest daughter, who came
to England to see her daughters
& after her arrival in Edinburgh
died quite suddenly & is in-
terred at Prestonpans
Cemetery beside her father
& mother & sisters. There were
three brothers of your late fathers
family Murdo your
late brother was called for
is grandfather & the name
of the youngest of the three
brothers of your late fathers

family was Dugald F Macleod
he was very clever & as he
was educated for the Medical
profession had a commission
presented to him in the
H.E.I.C.S. & passed as a
surgeon when he was only
18 years of age George
Outram & he were students
at the Edinburgh University
nearly 40 years ago, he
D. F. Macleod was a poet as
well as other clever qualities
when he was only nine years
of age he lost his father
& when he came back from
the obsequies of his father

he ran up into an empty room
that had on old arm chair
but away in it he was found
some time after fast asleep
where he had cried him self
to sleep & at his feet were
found the principle part of the
enclosed poem & when grown
up he added those lines in
he alludes to his youth at the
time of his loss & added the
homily at the bottom. I enclose
you two copies one for your
son & one for yourself pray
give it to your son & tell him
about his clever Uncle. Give
me some description of your
own family as you & John
Macleod Syme & M^{rs}
Thompson

are the only full cousins
I have remaining on
Earth. There is a Clan
Macleod Society & the
head branch is in Edinburgh
& and they are anxious to have
all Macleods join it at
home or abroad on receipt
of a reply to this letter
I will send you a likeness
of the Chief & a report of the
Society.
Now with kind regards to you
as I heard much about you
when you & Murdo were
young & residing in this
city of Edinburgh & if you
are

near J M Syme he
will remember me
& my late sister who
died 4 years ago in
Edinburgh
Expecting to hear from
you as soon as
possible, when I will
send you the Chiefs likeness
& the report of the Clann
Macleod Society in
Edinburgh
Your affectionate
Cousin
Mary C Macleod
[.....]

Grateful thanks are due to Helen (MacLeod) Bonney and to
Linda (McLeod) Bec for granting permission for the original letters to be published.

I am also very thankful to Andrew P. MacLeod
for permission to include his painstaking transcriptions.

Newspaper Cuttings: Jail Break!

STORNOWAY.

18th October 1856.

A young man of the name of Malcolm Macdonald from Kease, in the parish of Lochs, Island of Lewis, who has been for sometime back confined in the jail here on the charge of theft from lock-fast places, and who was committed to stand trial on these charges, made his escape from prison in the following manner:—The keeper, in the forenoon of Wednesday last, brought Macdonald out to work in the prison-yard, where he left him alone. Some of the keeper's family being engaged in carrying water to the prison, incautiously left the key in the entrance door, and Macdonald appears to have seized the opportunity of opening the door and making his escape. Our correspondent, after narrating the above, adds—“This is the third person who has escaped from the Stornoway prison during the reign of its present keeper. Inquiry should be made into this matter, as well as into the filthy state in which the prison is kept.”

Inverness Advertiser and Ross-shire Chronicle
28 October 1856

In the last issue we saw that more police were needed in Stornoway over 160 years ago, it seems appropriate to mention the situation in the Stornoway jail in the 1850s. Stornoway Sheriff Court had been built on Lewis Street in 1843; it contained both a prison and a courtyard; it was then remodelled and extended in 1870.

If any reader happens to know who this Malcolm Macdonald of Keose was, it would be excellent to know more. What had he been charged with stealing? Was he caught?

It is also interesting that this was third such jail-break in a short space of time. Is it possible that there was some collusion between the family of the jail-keeper and the accused?



Stornoway Sheriff Court, 2008

Photograph © Stephen Branley (cc-by-sa/2.0): www.geograph.org.uk/photo/1243657

Families of Lewis

This series continues with two articles (printed in 1952-53) on the Macleods.

Please see page 9 of the April 2023 issue for the acknowledgements due to various individuals and organisations.

MacLeods of Garrabost

THE fate of the last of the MacLeods of Lewis is one of the unsolved mysteries of Highland history. It may be recalled that in a previous article (on the MacPhalls) an account was given of the kidnapping of the sons of Torquil MacLeod (Torcall Dubh) in or about 1609. What happened to them afterwards? We can answer this question so far with the aid of a MS. which evidently derives from an early version of Sir Robert Gordon's "Earldom of Sutherland."

According to this account, the eldest son, Roderick, was in the custody of the Tutor of Kintail; William, the second son, was at the University of Glasgow; and Torquil, the youngest son, was with his uncle, Sir Roderick MacLeod of Harris.

There is some corroboration of the statement that William was at Glasgow University, in the records of which "Gulielmus McCloyd" appears as a student in the years 1619 and 1622.

We also know that Sir Roderick MacLeod was in ward in Edinburgh Castle in 1614 "for not exhibiting the Lewis rebels". The chief "rebel" in question was no doubt Torquil, the youngest of the three brothers.

It is to Sir Roderick's credit that, despite extreme pressure, he had not at this date handed over his nephew to the Privy Council, who in matters pertaining to Lewis were blindly subservient to the MacKenzies; nor is there any evidence to suggest that he did so afterwards.

Late Traditions

Further than this contemporary evidence does not take us, and we have to fall back on some late traditions which are now given for what they may be worth.

It seems clear that there are (or were) some MacLeods in Lewis who believed themselves to be descended from one of the legitimate sons of Roderick MacLeod, the last of his line to enjoy undisputed possession of the island; and it is to be noted that the only legitimate son known to have left male issue was Torcall Dubh.

By way of illustration we quote two incidents which took place in Lewis some time in the second half of last century. The scene of the first was a tavern in Stornoway, where two MacLeods were introduced to one another. The first question one of them asked was: "An ann dh'an teaghlach dhligeach a tha thu?" This question can only mean: "Are you descended from one of the legitimate sons of Roderick MacLeod of Lewis?" we are left to infer that the speaker believed himself to be so descended.

(In 1609 Privy Council demand that Torquil Dubh's son may be given up by Donald Gorm. - RPC VII. 755.)

latter being the
year in which he was
laureated.

"for not exhibiting of some of
the rebellis of the Lewis" (HP.
III. 146).

any of h

were/
one or more of the three sons
of Torquil Dubh.

Torquil

Cap.

The other incident is not without its humour, though the occasion was a funeral. There were certain families of MacLeods who claimed the right to burial within the old church at Eye next to the slab under which nineteen (some say twenty-one) MacLeod chiefs were laid to rest.

On the occasion referred to a man of the name of MacLeod died, and his relatives proposed to inter him next to the famous slab. This proposal was strongly resisted by another MacLeod present, who claimed that distinction for his branch of the family.

So fierce was the altercation that it was only with difficulty that the two factions were prevented from coming to blows. Finally one of the leading protagonists thought to settle the argument by drawing himself up to his full height and saying: "S ann leamsa tha Leodhus".

Dispute At Funeral

The only son of Torcall Dubh known to Lewis tradition is Torquill (Torcall Og). This suggests that if there were any descendants in the legitimate line he was their ancestor.

It is difficult to imagine under what circumstances the MacKenzies would have permitted the return to Lewis of Torcall Og or any of his family.

Sir Robert Gordon, in the passage already quoted, writes that "the tutor of Kintail, repented himself of his proceeding against the trybe of Shiel tor., or of the mcleods of the lewes," and this rather obscure statement may have some bearing on the matter.

The following tradition, if substantially correct, also sheds a certain amount of light. Some time after the MacKenzies had made good their hold upon Lewis, the chief of the MacLeods died, whereupon his family and kinsmen gathered together to convey his body for interment with his ancestors in the church at Eye.

The MacKenzies, alarmed by such a large concourse of MacLeods, mustered their forces and threatened to attack the funeral procession. A fight was only averted when a MacLeod patriarch represented to the MacKenzies the folly of keeping up the dispute between their clans any longer, and offered the future allegiance of the MacLeods in exchange for freedom to bury their dead in peace.

Unfortunately, there is no contemporary evidence by which to test this tradition. But it may be noted that when, in 1654, an attack by the MacKenzies upon Cromwell's garrison in Stornoway failed, the garrison took savage reprisals, and were aided by the "old natives", presumably the MacLeods, who cannot have been without leadership on that occasion.

Lewis/

See Highlander, 22 (1/9/1877).

It may also be noted that when Iain Garbh Mac Gille-chaluim of Raasay was drowned on the crossing from Lewis to Skye in April, 1671, one of those who perished with him was ~~Alexander MacLeod, described as a gentleman of the MacLeods of Lewis.~~

A brother of Alexander, whose name is not given, furnished an account of the disaster in the summer of the same year to the Rev. James Fraser, authour of the Wardlaw MS. We also know that about 1660 "a gentlewoman of the MacLeods of Lewis" married Farquhar Beaton, a member of the noted Skye family of that name.

Last of the Chiefs

We do not know for certain which MacLeods in Lewis were believed to be the legitimate representatives of the last of the old chiefs. But there are two families, possibly closely related, who attract our attention in that connection.

It is known that the MacLeods of Mealista in Uig buried their dead in the church at Eye. The route they followed across the moor from Mealista is still pointed out. There must have been some very powerful motive behind such a long and arduous journey.

One of this family, John MacLeod by name, migrated from Mealista to Lochs about 1774 and became tacksman of Seaforth. He was the progenitor of the Lewis bard, Murdo MacLeod (Murchadh a' Cheisteir), who could trace his ancestry for several generations beyond the above John to a certain Torquil.

Unfortunately, the details are apparently now forgotten and we may never know whether this Torquil is to be identified with Torcall Og.

The other family of the MacLeods of Garrabost, were undoubtedly the leading family of the name in Lewis at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

In 1715, when the Earl of Seaforth made preparations to call out the fighting men of Lewis, he gave instructions that one of the four captain's commissions was to go to Norman MacLeod, tacksman of Upper Bayble. (The additional tack of Garrabost was probably also in their possession by this date). He was the only MacLeod to receive a commission, and of all the officers it was he, according to tradition, whom the Lewis fighting men regarded as "their captain".

Norman MacLeod was known in his day as Tormod Og, from which we may perhaps infer that his father was also Norman MacLeod. He too appears to have been tacksman of Upper Bayble, and to have engaged with some success in the fishing industry, perhaps the first native Lewisman to do so on a commercial scale.

"one Alexander Macleod in Lewes." / (cf. General Notes IV. 109)

- The MacLeods of Hackte and the MacLeods of Garrabost. h

Carlaway /

of a /

one half of h

1766 /

The system was for the tackman to employ his sub-tenants in the work, having provided them with boats and gear. It is to be observed that Upper Bayble was within easy reach of the fishing-grounds of Bayble Head and Broad Bay.

Educated At Douai

I. Norman MacLeod (Tormod Og) the progenitor of MacLeods of Garra-bost, died on 1st May, 1739. He was twice married. His first wife was a daughter of George MacKenzie of Kildun.

The MacKenzies of Kildun were Roman Catholics, the only family of that persuasion in Lewis at the time, and they prevailed upon their son-in-law to adopt the same faith. Not without some inducements, however.

According to tradition, his reward was a grant of "some extra taxes", and this is confirmed by contemporary record, which shows that the

vicarage teinds of Lewis were farmed by "Normand McLeod in the parish of Eye & Kenneth McEiver in the parish of Lochs" for 1500 merks per annum.

Norman MacLeod's second wife was Catherine MacIver. His family, so far as known, was as follows:

(1) Torquil, of whom below.

(2) Norman, who was educated at the Scots College of Douai, which he entered on 24th July, 1732. From there he proceeded to Tournai, where he became a member of the Jesuit Order.

On returning to Scotland he succeeded Father John Farquharson as priest in Strathglass. He remained there until 1775, when he went into retirement in Edinburgh.

It is said that the people of Strathglass were greatly attached to him, and in some cases called their sons after him, thus introducing a name not previously in use in those parts.

(3) William, who also was educated at the College of Douai, which he entered on 28th September, 1735. Like his brother, he went to Tournai, and became a member of the Jesuit Order. Thereafter he became priest at Braemar in succession to Father Peter Gordon, who served there from 1736 to 1763. In the latter year Father MacLeod had 135 communicants. A manuscript volume which he called his "Menology" is still extant.

(4) George, of whom hereafter.

(5) Malcolm, merchant in Stornoway, who married with issue:†

(1a) Norman, who was served heir to his father, 3rd July, 1772. He was a merchant in Stornoway, and tacksmen of Lemreway, Isle Ewart, and the Shiant Isles.

We have an account of an alarming experience he had while living at Lemreway in the summer of 1780. A

Cf. GN VIII. 80.

Rev. Norman MacLeod in
Kintail (Macraes, 73).

"The Priest McLeod" (W1, 603).

* But note that he could not sign
his name (Tenantry, 81).

the h

Mc Eiver/

born c. 1715

born in 1717, h

at the age of fifteen h

born about 1720, h

born in 1726 h

cf * Spinal. Notes IV. 82.

* General Notes III. 160-8.

* General Notes I. 24.

MacLeod

by whom he had
with mine, an only child Mary, who
married Dr Alexander MacLeod,
in Stornoway h

He is also doubtless the Capt.
Murdo MacLeod found in
possession of his father's ten
on North Beach, Stornoway, in
1821 and 1831 (GN V. 23; HP, 74).
GN VIII. 19, 16. Cf. GN I. 81.

(3a) Hector (had a son Alexander,
tacksman of Valtos),
(4a) John, and

(5a) Alexander, each of
whom at one time or another
was tacksman of Valtos,
Locks.

(6a) George, merchant
in Stornoway. (GN IX. 25, 27,
40.)

* But see GN IV. 104-5.

French privateer, of Dunkirk, under
the command of the "Sans Peur" an
Irishman named Luke Ryan, put
into Loch Shell, made the tacksman
of Lemreway prisoner, and held him
up to ransom. The prisoner was
eventually released, which probably
indicates that the ransom was paid.

Norman MacLeod was twice
married, his first wife dying in March
1774. His second wife was Barbara,
daughter of Donald MacAulay
(Domhnall mac Dhughail), tacks-
man of Linshad. He died in
February, 1788.

At the time of his death his affairs
were somewhat involved, and
became the subject of prolonged
litigation in the Court of Session
between his widow and the creditors,
of whom the principal was John
MacLeod, tacksman of Seaforth.

(2a) Murdo, who acted as his
brother's shipmaster, and succeeded
him as tacksman of Lemreway.

Famous Swordsman

II. Torquil MacLeod succeeded his
father as tacksman of Garrabost and
Upper Bayble, and appears on record
as such in 1740. He was educated in
France at the same time that his
brothers were studying at the College
of Douai.

According to Lewis tradition he
was the best swordsman of his day,
trained as he was in the most famous
fencing schools on the continent. He
was a convinced Jacobite, but, like
the other tenants on the Seaforth
estates, he took no active part in the
events of 1745.

It was a strange chance whereby
Torquil MacLeod suffered for his
political opinions several years after
the storm seemed to have blown over.

In 1753 an English officer, Captain
Barlow, and a company of soldiers
were sent to the Long Island to hunt
for priests, arms, and the Highland
dress. The expedition was supported
at sea by a brig under the command
of Captain Ferguson.

It appears that Torquil MacLeod
fell in with some of Captain Barlow's
men in one of the Stornoway taverns,
and made use of "treasonable expres-
sions," possibly while in his cups.
Among other things he said that
"the King was a Rebel and he would
prove him so." The upshot was that
he was arrested, put on board Cap-
tain Ferguson's brig, and taken away
to London.

His final fate is unknown. It is
possible that he was transported.

III. George MacLeod succeeded his
brother Torquil as tacksman of
Garrabost and Upper Bayble. In his
youth he had been educated for the
priesthood, and entered the College
of Douai on 21st March, 1741. He
returned to Lewis, however, without
taking orders.

He was a notable character in his
day, a constant thorn in the flesh to
Seaforth and his chamberlains, and

General Notes IV. 25.

* Christina, daughter of
[of High-moffart] Roderick,
son of George
MacKenzie, II of Grouinard,
married "Norman MacLeod,
heir, with issue". [Finden's
Tables No. 12.] [MacKenzie of
Ballone, 40.]

* General Notes I. 24; IV. 82; V. 23;
VIII. 102.

Served heir to his
father, 15th October, 1740.

* Absent from Lewis in 1752?
(Highfield Papers, 104)
116

* ? the sloop Porcupine.

of

, born in 1726,

at the age of fifteen

the terror of lesser estate officials. (The saying, "Cho luath 's a chaidh am maor troimh Gharrabost" may well have had its origin in his time).

He was continually embroiled in disputes with his neighbours, the MacKenzies of Nether Bayble, whom he made the subject of frequent complaints, and latterly with his own son.

Pious Arguer

He could argue his case with considerable skill and address, but in a style so interlarded with pious sentiments that the reader may be excused for suspecting ~~that~~ he protests too much.

Some of his effusions are quite extraordinary. One petition to Seaforth begins: "Land Lords within the Circle of their own Boundary have a claim to that which is said of the ~~Deity~~. They have their Center every where and their Circumference no where." ^x

One reason why this passage is noteworthy is that it ~~is~~ an almost word-for-word quotation from Pascal. If George MacLeod had the independence of mind to find this arch-enemy of the Jesuits congenial, he can hardly have commended himself to the fathers of the College of Douai, and we need not be surprised that he did not complete his course there.

He was clearly a man of varied accomplishments. The author of the Bannatyne MS. "History of the MacLeods" quotes him as the authority for a statement made therein, and writes: "This story was given me by George MacLeod. This gentleman who was bred to the Catholic Church, was a scholar, an antiquary, and one of the best genealogists in the Highlands. He could remember the death of Queen Anne and the accession of George I, and lived to be nearly ninety years old."

George MacLeod was twice married, ^x but we do not know who the ladies were. In a petition dated at Stornoway, 13th November, 1790, he refers to his wife, and calls her "an indulgent nurse to my children these Eighteen Years past when she found them weak." ^x

Wealth From Canada

Of these children, however, we know nothing, except that one of his sons, presumably the eldest, was IV. Kenneth, ^x who succeeded his father as tacksman of Upper Bayble, and remained in possession until 1795. The general set of that year introduced many changes in tenancy. Kenneth MacLeod lost Upper Bayble, but he was given the tack of Lemreway in Lochs, which was declined in his favour by Allan Morison. ^x

In this connection the Chamberlain writes: "Kenneth is still a better tenant for Lemreway, as he would live on it, and improve it both in fishing and lands, and would set an example much wanted in Loch Shell."

x General Notes I. 25.
contains

quoted
the/ already referred to, which is

x General Notes I. 25 ; IV. 19, 52.

x General Notes IV. 82 ; V. 150

x cf. General Notes I. 18.

*x b. 1766 .
c. 1762 (GN IX 40)*

*x First wife died in 1770. Married
for second time in 1772.*

, second, ^h

- (1) John, of whom below,
and that he also had
a daughter,
(2) Catherine.

Kenneth MacLeod was still tacksmen of Lemreway in 1810. He married Mary, daughter of Kenneth Campbell, tacksman of Scalpay. All we know of his family is that he had a son.

V. - John, who had a very successful career in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. His life was full of incident and adventure. On one occasion he and his companions were attacked by Indians. MacLeod led the others to a place where they were able successfully to resist, and finally rout their assailants. The name Fort MacLeod in the Hudson's Bay Territory remains to this day to commemorate the encounter.

John MacLeod was known in Lewis as Seoc mac Choinnich 'ic Sheorais. He returned to Stornoway a wealthy man with shares in the Hudson's Bay and subsidiary companies. But he dissipated this wealth by speculating in shipping and fish-curing, enterprises of which he had little knowledge.

He married ~~Christine Morison~~ (nighean Uilleim mhic Dhonnai mhic Mheigie Mhurchaidh), great-grand daughter of the Rev. Murdo Morison, minister of Darvas, and had by her two sons:

(1) William, who in early life died at sea, without issue.

(2) Kenneth, who also led a seafaring life, and became a ship's captain. On retiring from the sea he lived in Liverpool, where he died about thirty years ago at an advanced age, without issue.

It is quite possible that there are MacLeods still in Lewis who represent this family. We should value any information which might help to locate them. SE 30/12/52

He married, first Catherine Morison

, by his first wife, ^h

x Present at laying of foundation stone of Lewis Castle in 1847. (General Notes IV. 82.)

~~a' Minister~~

Barbara, ^f
daughter of William Morison, minister in Stornoway (GN VIII. 23)

with issue:

- (1) Catherine (b. 1844).
- (2) Barbara (b. 1846).
- (3) John (b. 1848).
- (4) Christian (b. 1852).
- (5) Kenneth R. (b. 1854).
- (6) Daniel L. (b. 1858).

John MacLeod died at Stornoway, 10th April, 1864, ^{aged 69} (GN V. 122, 167). He was Master of Lodge Fortrose, 1854-55. (LF, 62)

Macleods Of Garrabost

Sir, - I should like to thank "Dufenal" for his most interesting letter, kindly forwarded by you, and especially for the valuable lists of MacLeods on record in Stornoway at various dates between 1769 and 1847.

This correspondent states that the last person interred in the old chapel at Eye was Margaret MacLeod, wife of Colin Nicolson, Bayble and a sister of Roderick MacLeod (Ruairidh Ban).

In this connection it may be of interest to recall that in his book "The Men of the Lews" the Rev. N. C. Macfarlane writes, apparently of the same Ruairidh Ban, that he was related to the highest and oldest families in the Lews, whose blood, some

people thought, was "as blue as a peacock's breast." Here again we have one of those tantalising hints which leave us wanting to know more.

I may also perhaps take the opportunity of mentioning that since writing the article on the above I have come across a reference to William, one of the three sons of Torcall Dubh, in a bond of caution signed by Sir Roderick MacLeod of Dunvegan, on 10th December, 1623. One of the witnesses is "Mr William McCloid sisterson to the said Sr. Rorie." The designation "Mr" indicates that by this date he had taken the degree of Master of Arts, doubtless at Glasgow University. Yours, etc., SC 20/1/53

MAC GILLE CHALUIM

"Gulielmus McCloyd"

RPC VIII. 824.

and we do in fact find that he was lauded at Glasgow University in 1622.

MACLEODS OF PABBAY/

K
HACLETE/

The ancestor of this branch of the MacLeods is Norman MacLeod, who flourished about 1500. He was a brother of the Chief of the time, most probably Roderick MacLeod of Lewis, who is on record at various dates between 1476 and 1495.

Norman MacLeod's descendants are still known as ~~Sin~~ Thormoid, and are numerous in the parish of Uig and elsewhere. He has been remembered chiefly in connection with the feud which broke out between his family and the MacAulays, most of whom are said to have been treacherously murdered by the MacLeods while they were celebrating the end of harvest at a place between Reef and Valtos called An Earrainn. The only survivor of the MacAulay ruling house was Iain Ruadh mac Dhughail, grandfather of Domhnall Cam. The story of how he lived to have his revenge on the MacLeods is one of the sagas of Lewis tradition.

Clann/

In one version of this story Norman MacLeod is said to have had his dwelling in Pabbay, but there is another version according to which he lived in Bernera. The truth appears to be that the family were endowed with extensive lands, including Haclete in Bernera, Earshader on the mainland opposite, Baile na Cille in Uig, and the island of Pabbay. It may be that the association with Pabbay does not go back as far as Norman MacLeod's time, for it is known that this was a favourite dwelling-place of MacLeod of Lewis himself, especially "quhen he wald be quyit or yit fearit."

Norman MacLeod's wife belonged to Skye, and he had a number of sons, including Norman (Tormod Og), who is said to have had the lands of Baile na Cille. It is believed that the names of other sons were Torquil, William, Allan, and Ranald. We know nothing further of the family during the 16th century except that when Roderick MacLeod, last of Lewis, married Jennette, daughter of Hector Og MacLean of Duart (c. 1565), the lands of Haclete, according to tradition, were in the hands of Norman MacLeod, known in his day as Tormod Mac Dhonnchaidh an t-Sroim.

Echo Of An Old Dispute

— Torquil MacLeod was head of the family in the second half of the 17th century. He must have been born about 1620. His father's name was John. He had at least two sons:

- (1) John, of whom below.
- (2) Donald (Domhnall Ban), probably the same Domhnall Ban who was tenant of Gislaidon Little Loch Roag when Zachary MacAulay was

† G.N. III, 30.

> ? (1a) Morman, ancestor of the
MacLeods of Garsbarr, +
father of Tormod Og who d.
1739.

x Possibly the same as John
Roy Mac Torquil Blair
(RSC, 3rd June, 1613, + 28th
August, 1616.) This John
had two brothers Murdoch
and Morman. A sister was
married to captain of the Proom
(H.P. II. 63).

Chamberlain (i.e. not later than 1735). He had a son called Donald (Domhnall Ruadh), ~~doubtless the Donald MacLeod who is on record as tenant of Gisle in 1766. In subsequent years he is referred to several times in connection with a dispute concerning the grazings of Kenroaort, to which John Morison (son of the Rev. Murdo Morison of Barvas) laid claim, but without success. About the same time there is a letter in which he is given a good character by the Chamberlain of Lewis, in reply to certain charges that had been preferred against him by Campbell of Taransay. He held the office of Seaforth's forester in Uig. Donald MacLeod (Domhnall Ruadh) had a son Norman, but we are unable to distinguish with certainty in contemporary record between him and his second cousin of the same name. One of them was married to Katherine, daughter of George MacKenzie, Stormoway, and lived at Gisle. Norman, son of Domhnall Ruadh, had a son Norman, whose son Norman (Tormod ~~of~~) was tenant in Baile a' Ghriasaiche, Ardrol. It is known, however, that his ancestors were in Gisle. When the clearances took place in Uig Tormod Mor migrated to Swainbost in Ness. He is said to have given evidence before Lord Napier's Commission. When asked to give his name, he replied: 'Is mise Tormod mac Thormoid mhic Thormoid mhic Dhomhnall Ruaidh mhic Dhomhnall Bhain mhic Thorcaill Bhiorshuilich Mhic Leoid a bha cumail cogadh ri Domhnall Cam, mac Dhughaill.'~~ The latter part of this statement is hardly correct, for Torquil cannot have been a contemporary of Domhnall Cam, but it is an echo of the old feud between the two families. Tormod Mor left descendants in Swainbost, including his grandson, the late Mr Norman MacLeod (Tormod Aonghuis), who died in November, 1950.

II. — John MacLeod (Iain mac Thorcaill) succeeded his father as head of the family. We cannot identify him in ~~such~~ records as are ~~extant~~. This may be accounted for by supposing that he was dead before 1726, in which year we find Earshader in possession of "Widdow Molead" and Donald MacLeod. Iain mac Thorcaill was one of the notable Lewismen of his day, and traditions of him have lingered on down to the present time. He appears to have been of a somewhat restless disposition, to judge from the following story. He was planning to remove to another part of Lewis, but before finally making up his mind he sent for advice to John Morison of Bragar. The latter gave added point to his reply by couching it in verse:

* General Notes I. 12, 13.

x General Notes I. 19, 24

Ⓐ See GN VII, 26, 28n, 30n.

the/ with certainty, but he is probably the John MacLeod who is tacksmen of Hacle in 1718 and 1726. ^{made} According to his own deposition, ^{in the 1680s} he was tacksmen there as early as 1686. He signs his name like a man of education. L

Cha toigh leis an t-seangan an t-socair,

Mar sin tha Mac Thorcaill 's an imrich:

Chan e dith arain no brochain, Ach toiseach aig' air a dhol iomrall.

John Macleod married a daughter of Murdo Matheson (Murchadh mac Dhughail mhic Iain Oig), ancestor of the Lewis Mathesons, with issue:

(1) Donald, of whom below.

(2) Murdo, of whom hereafter.

In addition he appears to have had a son

(3) John, tacksman of Pabbay at various dates between 1740 and 1754. ~~He may also be the John Macleod who is tacksman of Hacklete in 1726.~~ He had two sons:

(1a) Donald, on record as tacksman of Pabbay at various dates between 1755 and 1791, and also as constable or ground-officer of Uig. He may be the Donald Macleod who married Barbara, daughter of Roderick Mackenzie ~~of Alexander Mackenzie, of Achilty,~~ and at one time ~~tacksman of Lochs.~~ ground-officer of Lochs. L

(2a) John, for some time joint tacksman of Pabbay with his brother. In 1766 he signs his name as cautioner for Donald Macleod, tenant in Hacklete, probably a kinsman. A

Shipowner in Stornoway

III. — Donald Macleod, (Domhnall mac Iain mhic Thorcaill) is not identified with certainty in contemporary record, but it may be he and his widowed mother who, as shown above, were in possession of Earshader in 1726. There are reasons, as we shall see, for surmising that he married a daughter of Dugald MacAulay (Dughall mac Aonghuis mhic Dhomhnail Chaim), tacksman of Brenish, by whom he had issue:

(1) John of Colbecks, Jamaica, of whom below.

(2) Donald (or Daniel, as he usually signs himself), tacksman of Balaban, and merchant and shipowner in Stornoway. He figures largely in contemporary correspondence. He was a man of strong and colourful personality, and regarded in certain quarters as something of an agitator. He was one of those who took the lead in organising emigration from Lewis to America in the eight decade of the eighteenth century. Several of the ships which were to take the emigrants overseas were chartered by him. Donald MacLeod was a cousin of the Rev. John MacAulay, Barra, and of the Rev. Kenneth MacAulay, Cawdor, and it would therefore appear that his mother is to be identified as above. The Rev. Kenneth MacAulay expected his sister's children to be beneficiaries by the terms of

* John MacLeod, Junior, on record in Hacklet in 1729. Elder in 1740? (Synod of Glenelg Register). Cannot write.

* General Notes IV. 48.

nephew/

~~connected with Achilty family,~~

Donald MacLeod in Carl? (1780)
(? great-grandson of Torquil,
for second time)

who, together with a "Widdow McLeod", is /

* General Notes III. 136, 143, 144, 165, 174;
IV. 19, 20

"Spies at Barra mitted for spinning" (GN III. 143).

h/h

* General Notes III. 132. See Graham, Colonists from Scotland, 85, 178(?).

[as was also the Rev. John MacAulay, Barra L]

g/L/

L/

L/
K/
K/

It was apparently a daughter of his who married Donald Mackenzie (Domhnall mac Ailain Ruaidh) of the Crossbest family. (See p. 293)

A and also as joint tacksman of Tolsta Charbais, with Malcolm.

(cf. GN IV. 48).

They emigrated in 1773.

III III L/
of Lh

went out to/

Cf. Fasti VII. 68.

⊗ Daughter Margaret? (GN IX. 2),
who m. Angus MacAulay.

the will of John MacLeod of Colbecks. When the latter died his brother Donald appears to have been already in Jamaica, and he writes a letter from there, dated 9th December, 1775. Another letter of his is dated at Kinbeachie, 28th April, 1779, and we may therefore infer that he is the "D. MacLeod" (known to have been of this family) who married Janet, daughter of

Thomas Urquhart, sixth of Kinbeachie in the Black Isle, with issue, three daughters, including Lady Falconar, and Jessie, who married, as his second wife, Sir Archibald Grant, third Baronet of Monymusk, without issue.

(3) Christian, who married Donald MacLeod.

(4) Mary, who married Kenneth MacIver.

(5) Barbara, who married Angus Smith.

These three daughters of Domhnall mac Iain mhic Thorcaill received annuities of £20 sterling by the terms of the will of their brother John.

Planter In Jamaica

IV. John MacLeod made a fortune as a planter in Jamaica, and acquired the estate of Colbecks in that island. In 1762 he matriculated arms at the Lyon Court in Edinburgh as the nearest heir male and representative of Roderick MacLeod, last Baron of the Island of Lewis. He gave his ancestry as above, but claimed that his great-grandfather was brother-german of Roderick MacLeod of Lewis. The Lord Lyon accepted the claim, despite the fact that there is no record of Roderick MacLeod having had such a brother. Many people in the Highlands at the time appear to have regarded this episode as something of a joke, for we find John MacLeod frequently referred to as "The Squire" in contemporary correspondence. Curiously enough, his brother Donald is accorded the same sobriquet, even in accounts and other business papers. The account of his ancestry given here is founded upon the assumption that Domhnall mac Iain mhic Thorcaill and Murchadh mac Iain mhic Thorcaill, who were clearly contemporaries, were also brothers. It is most unlikely that two prominent MacLeods in the same island would be known as Iain mac Thorcaill, without any attempt to distinguish between them, for it is the function of patronymics to make such distinctions. John MacLeod of Colbecks died on 13th May, 1775. He married, first, Janet, daughter of Malcolm MacLeod, eighth of Raasay, and widow of John Mackinnon of Mackinnon, with issue a son John, of whom below; and secondly Margaret, daughter of Roderick MacLeod, W. S., grandson of Sir Norman MacLeod of Bernera.

* General Notes IV. 25, 52.

* General Notes III. 175 (IV. 25).

* General Notes I. 28.

See MacLeods-Genealogy,
Section V, p. 46.

* Janet

h/k ⊗ Subscriber to Genealogy
of Honour of Forbes (1819)?

(GN IX. 24)

were provided in/

* General Notes I. 20; III. 139, 176.
Extracts, 211.

Clan MacLeod Magazine
(1945), p. 347.

h

* See John MacLeod's letter
to Dundas (having MSS.
Vd. II. 656. - Hist. MSS.
Comm. Report).

V_L — John MacLeod succeeded to the estate of Colbecks. He figures chiefly on the page of history as colonel of the last of the old fencible regiments, which was given the name of the Princess Charlotte of Wales. This regiment was raised in 1799 and was reduced in 1802 after three years' service in Ireland. Thereafter Colonel John MacLeod lived in London, where he died in 1823. He married his cousin Jane, daughter of John MacLeod, ninth of Raasay, with issue nine children. The only son to reach maturity was the eldest, Barlow, but he died in early life, without issue.

Aonghus Nam Beann

We now return to:—

III_{III} — Murdo MacLeod (Murchadh mac Iain mhic Thorcaill). He appears first on record in 1740 as joint tacksman of Pabbay with John MacLeod, probably his brother. Afterwards he became tenant of Gisla and Kenrearsort. In 1754 he depones, inter alia, that he is "a Married man aged Sixty four years" and that he had come to Gisla from Pabbay two years previously. Murdo MacLeod was Seaforth's forester in Uig. He was married and had at least the following children:

(1) John, of whom below.

(2) Norman, possibly the same as Norman MacLeod who is on record as tacksman of Cleite-hog (on the opposite side of Little Loch Roag from Gisla) at various dates between 1780 and 1791.

(3) A daughter who married An Gobha Dubh, ~~Androg~~.

IV_L — John MacLeod became tacksman of Gisla about 1773, and was still tacksman in 1791. He also carried on business as a cooper in Stornoway. He signs his name like a man of good education. He was succeeded by

(1) Murdo MacLeod, the last of his line in Gisla. His patronymic is not now remembered, for he was known as Murchadh Ghiosla, but it is practically certain* that he was John MacLeod's son, especially as he had a brother.

(2) John who was styled Iain Og. Iain Og settled in Valtos, and we may note that on 10th January, 1826,

a "John MacLeod, tenant of Valtos" is one of the two "discreet men" appointed to help the Presbytery of Lewis to design a glebe for the minister of Uig. Mr Angus MacLeod, No. 12 Valtos, is a great-grandson of John MacLeod, as is also the Rev. Murdo MacLeod, Portmahomack, whose father was Domhnall Dhomhnaill mhic Iain Oig.

V_L — Murdo MacLeod (Murchadh Ghiosla) married Annabella MacKenzie and had at least two children — Cursty, baptized 26th November, 1824, and Donald, baptized 12th June, 1827. We cannot at present trace any descendants.

may also be
and he is ~~probably~~ the Murdo
MacLeod who has a lease of
the mill of Bernera in the
same year. In addition,
he may be the Murdo MacLeod
who is one of three tenants in
Shalesboro in 1771, and was
succeeded by his son Malcolm
there by 1776.

1776-1791

(4) Malcolm, in Shalesboro
(General Notes III, 192) II. 17;
His son Malcolm (1781-1863) (GN VII).
Like his father, he was
forester in Uig. L

* This is, on the contrary,
very doubtful, for there is
a tradition that this Murdo
was born at Enista, where
Eam M'Coil was Eam and
at/ Angus M'Coil was Eam
and tenants in 1780 & 1787,
(cf. Malcolm M'Coil
was Eam in Shalesboro
in 1766.)

1767. William MacLeod in
Cleite-hog under lease
(General Notes III. 135.)

(4) Donald, of Lag Ideagob/
(see details
at top of p. 55)
He emigrated
to America
in 1771.

(5) Annabella, who married
Duncan Smith, tacksman
of Drevornish?

* She was an da. of Donald
MacKenzie (Donald
was Ailin Duaidh) from
boles, who was killed with
the 78th Highlanders.

P/P

It may not be generally known that Aonghus nam Beann, that unique figure in the religious annals of Lewis, was one of these MacLeods. He was by patronymic Aonghus mac Dhomhnail mhic Mhurchaidh, and was a cousin in some degree of the above Murdo MacLeod of Gislea. Another cousin, Pàdraig Calum mhic Mhurchaidh, was a tenant in Ardroll but suffered eviction from there, together with many others, and was one of the Uig migrants who settled at Swainbost in Ness about 1839. (8)

7 9

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lh #
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h

56 1/9/53

⊗ Calum's son, Pàdraig, said, "Thàinig mise a Uig ann an sgeap air domhan mo mhàthar." Pàdraig had a brother Mhurchadh. Both qualified for the Old Age Pension when first introduced.

Donald, father of Norman MacLeod of Garrabost

Donald MacLeod was granted the tack¹ of Upper Bayble in the Sett of 1700.² His son, Norman MacLeod of Garrabost, also known as *Tormod Og*, died an ‘old man’³ on 1st May, 1739.⁴ Norman was therefore probably born between 1650 and 1670, with Donald being born within just a few decades of the Mackenzie takeover of Lewis in 1610.

It seems unlikely that the Mackenzies would have permitted a local man – and he of a formerly hostile clan – to take his place in the middle level of society, but when taunted in adult life as a “son of the fisherman” Norman had a swift rejoinder: “That is what I am, and son of the huntsman too.”⁵ This acknowledgement of his social position asserted that he came from a higher rank, though now sadly reduced.

Although the MacLeods were, in general, considered untrustworthy by the Mackenzies, Donald’s family must have managed to find favour with them. Indeed, Norman’s son George stated that his family had been pro-Mackenzie “since the beginning of King Charles the First his troubles”.⁶ The date referred to may be 1637 as Charles’ difficulties in Scotland began in earnest that year following the introduction of the Book of Common Prayer in the Scottish kirk.

During the winter of 1653-54 Lord Seaforth stormed the fort at Stornoway. Whilst damage was done, the attack was a failure, and reprisals were savage; the English garrison were aided by the ‘old natives’ in slaughtering those who had taken part in the plot. These ‘old natives’ were presumably the remnants of Siol Torquil and their supporters.⁷ In all likelihood, the MacLeods of Garrabost continued to align themselves with the Mackenzies during this period and would, consequently, have been despised by many.

¹ A lease, the tacksman being the holder of the lease.

² Appendix B. See page 2, lines 15 & 16.

³ *The Western Isles: Their History, Traditions and Place-Names*, by W.C. Mackenzie, 1932, Paisley, p.147 & 153.

⁴ Commissariat of the Isles. “Normand MacLeod: Died 1st May 1739. Testament ‘faithfully made and given up by George MacLeod lawfull son and Exetr Dative and nearest of kin to the said Defunct. Enclosed is Roderick McLeod of Contullich’s bond for 1000 merks Scots, dated at Clagan, 15th December 1729. Norman called ‘Normand McLeod of Garabost’. Witnesses Donald McLeod of Unnish and Donald McDermitt ‘my Lawr.’ [Rep 12 Jan 1759]”. Published with kind permission of Mrs Mary Yardley, Rev William Matheson’s niece. Original on deposit at National Library of Scotland (NLS Acc 9711 Box 7/6 p.36).

⁵ Mackenzie, *The Western Isles*, p.150.

⁶ Appendix B. See page 1, lines 15 to 17.

⁷ *History of the Outer Hebrides*, by W.C. Mackenzie, 1903, London, p.359-361.

It is said that Norman spent three years in “Huntly’s family”,⁸ gaining qualifications which distinguished him throughout his life. As the Marquess of Huntly was made 1st Duke of Gordon in November 1684, Norman’s time in Huntly’s household was probably prior to that. At some point after this he joined the Dutch Service⁹, almost certainly with the Scots Brigade.¹⁰

Scots Brigade records detail a Lieutenant Norman MacLeod of Colonel Aeneas Mackay’s Regiment of Foot who received his commission on 1st August 1693, becoming Captain-Lieutenant on 30th March 1697.¹¹ In 1701 he is shown as being Captain-Lieutenant of the company of the late Captain Bruce.¹²

Norman is listed as head of his company in the State of War lists for 1703 through 1710.¹³ It is said that he was dead by 26th August 1712, at which time he had been succeeded by one David Sinclair.¹⁴ However, it is unclear whether he had actually died; it is possible that the transcriber of the documents presumed his death when he disappeared from the documentation. The circumstantial evidence that Norman MacLeod of the Scots Brigade is to be identified with Norman MacLeod of Garrabost is great:

- between c.1684 and 1693 he had time to move up through the ranks until he reached a position which would be documented in detail.
- he was a lieutenant and later a captain-lieutenant, as described in George’s letter of 1786: Norman had a “Commission of Leutenancie in the Dutch Service”.
- he disappears from the State of War lists between 1710 and 1712, whilst Norman MacLeod of Garrabost was on the Isle of Lewis to father his son Torquil, born c.1715.

⁸ Mackenzie, *The Western Isles*, p.148. This probably refers to George Gordon who was Marquess of Huntly from 1661 to 1684. Having been born in 1643 he was educated at a Catholic Seminary in France, joined the army of Louis XIV and returned to Scotland around 1675.

⁹ Appendix B. See page 3, lines 15 & 16.

¹⁰ The Scots Brigade was an infantry brigade in the army of the Dutch Republic; the regiment commanded by Hugh Mackay (d.1692), Aeneas Mackay (d.1697) and Robert Murray (d.1719) was favoured by men from the Highlands.

¹¹ James Ferguson, *Scots Brigade in Holland, Volume I, 1572 – 1697*, (Scottish History Society, Vol. XXXII, 1899), p.571.

¹² James Ferguson, *Scots Brigade in Holland, Volume II, 1698 – 1782*, (Scottish History Society, Vol. XXXV, 1899), p.51.

¹³ *ibid.* p.30-45

¹⁴ *ibid.* p.114.

Whether or not this Norman MacLeod was the man from Garrabost, it is certainly true that Norman sold his commission and returned to Seaforth's side as an accomplished soldier. Although W.C. Mackenzie makes various claims¹⁵ about Norman's military experiences at the time of Sheriffmuir, no source is currently known for them. However, it does appear that Norman reached the rank of Major under Seaforth, as his son George described himself as "the last of [Seaforth's] Major's children".

Norman received the tack of Garrabost at the time of the "Collonel's Sett".¹⁶ In both 1718¹⁷ and 1726¹⁸ he also had the tack of Upper Bayble, his father Donald having held the lease from 1700¹⁹, presumably until Donald's death at some point during the first two decades of the 1700s. Norman continued to enjoy the tack of Garrabost at this time, although the situation was a little more complex there; in 1718 he had half of Garrabost in his own name, and seems to have been working the other half for Colin Mackenzie.

It is well documented²⁰ that in the late 17th century George Mackenzie of Kildun – who had converted to Catholicism in 1686²¹ and so become head of the only Roman Catholic family in Lewis at the time – lived in Aignish and had a priest, Cornelius Conn, in his house in order to teach his children. Conn is said to have renounced his calling to the point that Jean, a daughter of the house, became

¹⁵ Mackenzie, *The Western Isles*, p.148-149.

¹⁶ The date for the Sett conducted by Colonel Alexander Mackenzie (see Appendix B, page 2, lines 16 & 17) is unknown, but must have been between 1700 (the occasion of a previous Sett) and 1716 (when Seaforth was attainted). If the Scots Brigade records have been interpreted correctly, then the Colonel's Sett must have been conducted between 1710 and 1716.

¹⁷ Norman McLeod, Garbost in Ey, to pay rental of £6-18-10²/₃ (sterling).

Do. (for Colin McKenzie), Garbost in Ey, to pay rental of £6-18-10²/₃ (sterling).

Do., for Upper-bible in Ey, to pay rental of £9-6-9 (sterling), with 6 muttons, 4 stone of butter & 1 boll of meall.

As described in the *Report by the Crofters Commission on the Social Condition of the People of Lewis in 1901, as compared with Twenty Years ago, Appendix O: Judicial Rental for the Isle of Lewis, taken for the Forfeited Estates Commissioners in 1718*. HMSO, Glasgow, 1902.

¹⁸ Normand McLeod, Garribost in Eye, to pay rental of £83-6-8 (Scots)

Donald Mathewson, Garribost in Eye, to pay rental of £83-6-8 (Scots)

Normand McLeod, Upper Bible in Eye, to pay rental of £112-1-0 (Scots), with 6 muttons, 4 stone of butter & 1 boll of meal.

As described in *Highland Papers, volume 2, p.322*. Edited by J. R. N. MacPhail. Edinburgh, Scottish History Society, 1916.

¹⁹ Appendix B. Page 2, lines 15 to 17.

²⁰ Various communications from Conn and his contemporaries demonstrate that he spent time on the Isle of Lewis. See *Cornelius Con: An Irish Priest in the Hebrides*, by Michael Robson, 2002, Ness. Tradition states that the 'Laird of Kilduin' resided at Aignish. Mackenzie, *The Western Isles*, p.149.

²¹ *Cornelius Con: An Irish Priest in the Hebrides*, by Michael Robson, 2002, Ness, p.8.

pregnant by him during the winter of 1688/89.²² It is disputed whether²³ or not²⁴ the couple had married. Conn's punishment seems to have been delayed because of the political reverberations surrounding the revolution, but the fact that Conn was subsequently banished by George Mackenzie strongly suggests that no marriage had taken place. It is related that Jean then married Norman MacLeod of Garrabost, he converting to Catholicism in order to make the match acceptable to the Mackenzies.

The dates for these events are somewhat uncertain, but Jean may have been a young woman in 1688, and so born perhaps c.1670, meaning that her child-bearing years would have reached an end c.1715. It has been assumed that Jean then died because Norman is said to have taken a second wife, Catherine MacIver. Before considering these two ladies any further it is necessary to contemplate the available evidence regarding Norman's five sons.

²² "In March 1688...Con was again in Uist". By "the summer or autumn of 1688 Con [was] in Lewis". "There is a record of his suspension on 22 March 1689". Robson, *Cornelius Con*, p.10-12.

²³ Robson, *Cornelius Con*, p.18.

²⁴ Mackenzie, *The Western Isles*, p.149.

The sons of Norman MacLeod of Garrabost

Torquil, Norman's son, was probably born c.1715 as one tradition²⁵ quotes his father saying, "Well, Torquil,... I will yield you the victorious weapon which I now hold, and with which I have often fought and repelled the enemies of our country, when you were yet upon your mother's breast", thereby probably referring to the battle of Sheriffmuir.

Torquil was educated in France at the same time his younger brothers were studying in Douai. Matheson²⁶ reports that Torquil later succeeded his father as tacksman of Garrabost and Upper Bayble, appearing as such in 1740²⁷, and that he was, according to Lewis tradition, the best swordsman of his day.

Torquil was a convinced Jacobite but, in common with other men on the Seaforth estates, he took no active part in the events of 1745. However, in 1746²⁸ he was arrested in a Stornoway tavern for using 'treasonable expressions', and was taken to London.

His final fate is unknown; one tradition²⁹ states that King George II promised Torquil his liberty if he would successfully duel with a 'foreign bully'. The encounter ending in Torquil's favour, it is said that King George II reneged on his promise, saying that Torquil was still a bigoted supporter of Prince Charles, and ordering that he be returned to prison. Another account³⁰ states that he was freed and left for France, never returning to Scotland. This lack of certainty makes further speculation unwise at present.

²⁵ Mackenzie, *The Western Isles*, p.155.

²⁶ See Appendix A for Matheson's comments upon Torquil son of Norman.

²⁷ "Garibost Ui, Torkile McLeod & moyr", transcribed from *My Lord's Rental of the Lewis Island 1740*. Published with kind permission of Mrs Mary Yardley, Rev William Matheson's niece. Originals on deposit at National Records of Scotland, GD427/1/1.

²⁸ 'Extracts from a Lewis MS.', Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness, Vol. XXXIX/XL, p.160. Matheson (see Appendix A) states 1753 as the year of Torquil's downfall, but no source is known for this, and 1746 is more likely given that his brother George was not so advanced in his studies as to not be able to leave them.

²⁹ Mackenzie, *The Western Isles*, p.154-161.

³⁰ 'Extracts from a Lewis MS.', p.152-166.

Norman³¹ was born in Garrabost on 16th April 1717, the son of Norman MacLeod and Catherine MacIver.³² He was educated at the Scots College of Douai, entering on 24th July 1732. From there he proceeded to Tournai where he became a member of the Jesuit Order on 27th September 1738. Norman served at Strathglass, remaining there until at least 1775.

It is recorded that, “at the time of his appointment to this mission, the storm which had been raging against the Catholics had now, in a great measure, blown over. Farther than the recollections of his holy and edifying life, the history of the mission during his encumbency affords no other facts than that he built a rude chapel but suited to the circumstances of the times in which he lived. We find him also the first priest of that period who penetrated into Kintail.”³³

Norman retired to Edinburgh, dying there at the age of 60 in 1777.³⁴

³¹ Peter Normanson (alias Norman MacLeod). Born in Garriboast, Scotland, 16 April 1717; entered the Society of Jesus at Tournay, 27 September 1738; took simple vows, 28 September 1740; Scots College Douai studying theology, 1740; becomes Subdeacon (?), 18 December 1745; 1748 – disappears from the catalogue; professed of the four vows at Fasnacayl [Fasnakyle], 1754. *Kindly translated and transcribed by M. Allen from a photocopy of the Latin records held by the Archivum Britannicum Societatis Iesu, Reference 46/4/3. [? Indicates that the photocopy is unclear]*

³² “When John Farquharson left Strathglass, in 1753, his place was taken by Norman MacLeod. He was the son of Norman MacLeod and Catherine MacIver. When fifteen years old, he entered the college at Douai on 24 July 1732. He had a successful course in philosophy where he graduated *summa cum lauda* and left Douai on 24 September 1738, *omnibus charissimus*, to join the Society at Tournai. Two brothers, William and George, were also at Douai; William became a Jesuit... “The suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773 made no difference to those missions which were served by priests of the Society who were normally assimilated to the secular clergy, and Fr MacLeod remained at his post... In a letter dated 16 June 1777, bishop Grant informs his coadjutor, Bishop Hay, that Norman MacLeod was utterly worn out and seeking rest. His place would be taken by John Chisholm. It was about this time that he retired to Edinburgh but, a few months later, he was dead. ‘I am very sorry to hear of Mr Norman McLeod’s death,’ wrote bishop John MacDonald to bishop Hay on 15 September. ‘He wore himself out to the last in his Apostolic labours, and I trust to God he has come to a great reward for I know not a more diligent labourer, or more anxious about everything relating to his duty.’ He was the last of a line of Jesuits who had given Strathglass of their best for three quarters of a century.” *The Innes Review, Volume 24 Issue 2, page 75-102, ISSN 0020-157x Available Online Aug 2010.*

³³ John Boyd, *A short memoir of the Mission of Strathglass*, Malignant Cove, 1850

³⁴ “Norman MacLeod (ex-SJ), who had the alias Normanson, came to Strathglass in 1753 and remained till 1777, when he retired to Edinburgh and died there in that year, aged 60”. *Archivum Britannicum Societatis Iesu, 46/4/3, photocopy of ‘Clergy Lists of the Highland District, 1732-1828’ in The Innes Review vol. 17 supplied by the Scottish Catholic Archives, 1992.*

William³⁵ was born on 7th April 1720 and followed his brother Norman to Douai, commencing his training on 28th September 1735.³⁶ He served at Braemar³⁷, eventually dying in Edinburgh on 19th May 1784. He is buried in the Canongate Churchyard.³⁸

George is recorded as being the son of Catherine MacIver.³⁹ He followed his brothers Norman and William to Douai on 21st March 1741⁴⁰; given that they had each commenced their studies within a few months of their 15th birthdays, it is very likely that George was born c.1726.

Unlike his brothers George returned to Lewis without taking orders; Matheson speculates that George was, perhaps, not very biddable. In his letter of 1786, however, George comments⁴¹ that he had no real choice in the matter, being instructed to return to Lewis by Seaforth. A consideration of dates does make this appear plausible: Norman and William had both entered the Society of Jesus aged between 21 and 22 years. If George had followed the same path then he could have been expected to enter the Society c.1747, and so it seems that his return to Lewis may have been less to do with any failure in his religious studies⁴², but rather that Seaforth required him to return in order to succeed his brother Torquil as tacksman of Garrabost and Upper Bayble, following Torquil's forced removal from the island in 1746.

³⁵ William Normanson (alias MacLeod). Born Scotland, 7 April 1720; Entered the Society of Jesus at Tournay, 28 September 1742; Took simple vows, 29 September 1744; Master of Rudiments at the College of Cambrai, 1744; Master of Rudiments at Cambrai (?), 1745; Scots College Douai studying theology, 1747; 1752 – disappears from the catalogue; professed of the four vows at Aberdeen, 2 February 1758. *Kindly translated and transcribed by M. Allen from a photocopy of the Latin records held by the Archivum Britannicum Societatis Iesu, Reference 46/4/3. [? Indicates that the photocopy is unclear]*

³⁶ Information from the internal Jesuit publication, *Letters & Notices* 39 (1924), pp. 306-312.

³⁷ There was another William MacLeod at Braemar in the early 1800s. This was unquestionably an unrelated individual.

³⁸ "May 1784. On the 19th died Mr William MacLeod, a native of the Lewis and of one of the principal families of that name. He had studied at Douai, entered into the Society of Jesus, taught school in Flanders, was missionary several years at Aberdeen, lived for some short time in Braemar after the Society was extinguished and then came to Edinburgh where he remained without any charge to the time of his death. He was buried in the Canongate churchyard." *Archivum Britannicum Societatis Iesu*, 46/4/3, photocopy of 'Autobiographical Notes of Bishop John Geddes' in *The Innes Review* vol. 18 supplied by the Scottish Catholic Archives, 1992.

³⁹ "Catherine McIver and George McLeod her son" are enumerated in a 'List of people in Lewis who were granted Entry Bills, circa 1754'. Published with kind permission of Mrs Mary Yardley, Rev William Matheson's niece. Original on deposit at National Records of Scotland (GD427/29/1).

⁴⁰ See Appendix A.

⁴¹ See Appendix B, page 3, line 23.

⁴² See Appendix B, page 3, lines 17-29.

George was often in dispute with his neighbours but was also very accomplished, being described as ‘one of the best genealogists in the Highlands’. It was said that he could remember the death of Queen Anne in 1714, and that he lived to be nearly ninety years old.⁴³ The latter may be true, suggesting that he may have died c.1815, but he was born over a decade after Queen Anne’s death. It is true that George’s closing remarks in his letter of 1786 refer to his ‘great grand climateric’ but this is much less impressive than it sounds.⁴⁴ It seems more likely that his nearly ninety years are an exaggeration, particularly as he is last on record in 1790.⁴⁵

George had an unknown number of unspecified children in addition to his heir Kenneth, but we know neither their names nor whether they had children of their own.

Malcolm was a merchant in Stornoway and married to one Magdalen MacLeod.⁴⁶ His son and heir Norman was also a merchant in Stornoway, in addition to being tacksman of Lemreway, Isle Ewart and the Shiant Isles. Malcolm’s other sons were Donald, John, Murdo (later tacksman of Lemreway)⁴⁷, William, Roderick and Alexander while his daughters were Mary, Jean and Catharine, these last two surely carrying the names of Jean Mackenzie and Catherine MacIver.

⁴³ “...George MacLeod. This gentleman, who was bred to the Catholic Church, was a scholar, an antiquary, and one of the best genealogists in the Highlands. He could remember the death of Queen Anne and the accession of George i., and lived to be nearly ninety years old.” From *The MacLeods of Dunvegan*, p.41, by the Rev. Canon R.C. MacLeod of MacLeod, transcribing the Bannatyne Manuscript. Privately printed for the Clan MacLeod Society, 1927.

⁴⁴ See Appendix B, page 4, line 25. The implication is that George was in his early sixties in 1786.

⁴⁵ See Appendix C.

⁴⁶ “Assignation 1773 by Norman McLeod as sole heir and executor of the deceased Malcolm McLeod his father by his latter will and testament to Mr John Dingwall writer in Edinburgh, witnessed by Colin Mackenzie and Roderick Mackenzie merchants in Stornoway. ... Extract of will mentions Magdalen McLeod, Malcolm McLeod’s wife, gift of 1/4 of Lady Caroline sloop to his son Donald and 1/6 of the Endeavour sloop, sons John, Murdoch, William, Roderick and Alexander and daughters Mary, Jean and Catharine. Donald MacEiver and William MacAulay, merchants in Stornoway and Mr John Clark minister of the Gospel in Stornoway to be advisers to his spouse. Written by the minister and witnessed by Donald Maceiver and Donald McCaskill surgeon.” From *Vessels (with crews) claiming the herring bounty from Stornoway 1764-1777*, typescript by F. Bigwood, p.3.

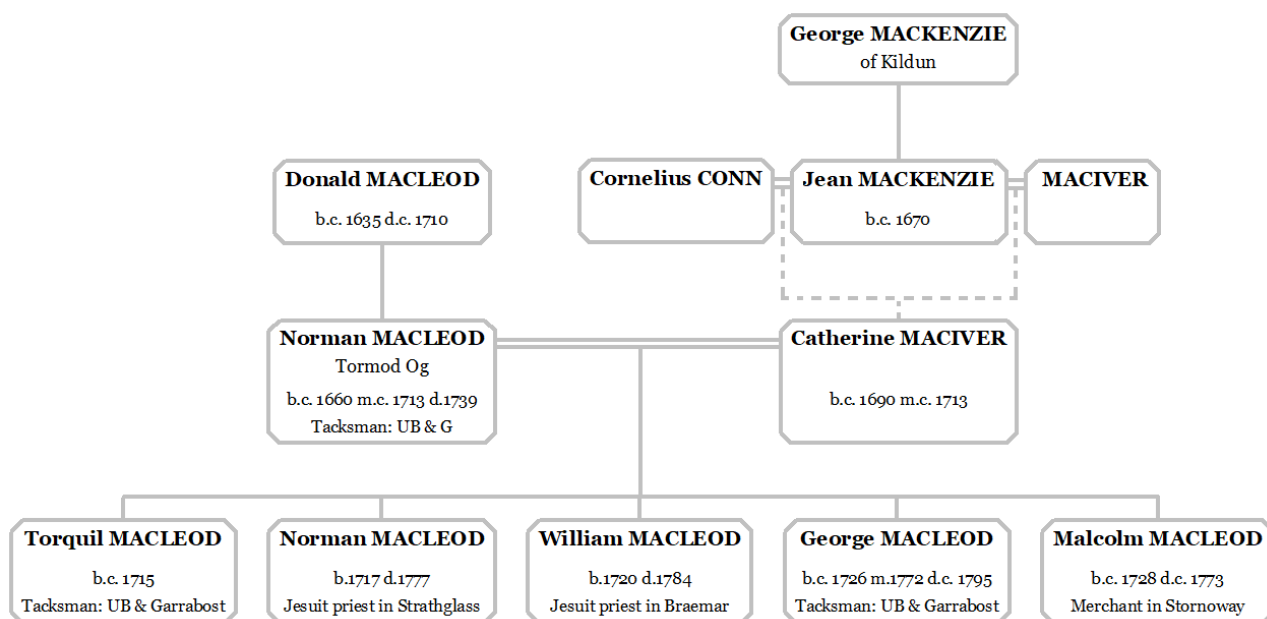
⁴⁷ See Appendix A.

Jean Mackenzie and Catherine MacIver

The historical details regarding Norman's sons mean that it is now necessary to re-evaluate the traditions regarding these two ladies. Jean was pregnant by Cornelius Conn in the late 1680s, and so it is highly unlikely that she could be the mother of Torquil, born c.1715, and impossible for her to also be the mother of George, born c.1726. It follows that if the sons all shared the same mother then this mother could not have been Jean Mackenzie, daughter of George Mackenzie of Kildun.

However, George's claim to be "a cadet of Seaforth's Family",⁴⁸ if true, would probably require his mother, Catherine MacIver, to have been the genealogical link with the Mackenzies. That throws doubt on the treatment of Catherine MacIver as Norman MacLeod's second wife as she – according to all previous authors – had no blood connection with Jean Mackenzie.

Andrew P. MacLeod has suggested⁴⁹ a possible explanation which, whilst speculative, describes how Catherine MacIver may have been the mother of Norman MacLeod's sons, whilst they also had Mackenzie ancestry through Jean Mackenzie. This is shown in the tentative pedigree below.



The dates of birth of the five sons suggest that Catherine was born in the first half of the 1690s. That would permit Catherine to have been a daughter of Jean,

⁴⁸ See Appendix B, page 2, lines 4 & 5.

⁴⁹ Private email correspondence (dated 14 January 2019) from Andrew P. MacLeod to Bill Lawson and W. Cumming, followed by a telephone conversation (15 January 2019) between W. Cumming and Andrew P. MacLeod.

whether her father was an otherwise unknown MacIver who (instead of Norman MacLeod) subsequently married Jean or was Cornelius Conn himself. In this latter case the proposed MacIver would have brought Catherine up as his own daughter and given her his surname.

Thus Catherine MacIver would have been of Mackenzie descent, and of an age to marry from c.1710, and able to bear children until at least c.1730. The pedigree on the previous page illustrates this theory.

All the evidence suggests, therefore, that Norman Og was as much as two generations older than his sons. This is less unlikely than it sounds, as it seems to have been quite normal⁵⁰ for young men to enlist with the army, serve for twenty or more years, and then return home. It may be that their military bearing and foreign experiences were an attraction for some young women, but it is certain that the relative financial security offered by a man with a regular pension would have been an inducement for others.

Conclusion

Matheson's suggestion that MacLeods of this family might still live in Lewis is plausible given the fact that Malcolm's sons numbered seven, whilst George had an unknown number of children, some of whom may have been male. If this is so, then Y-DNA tests could be invaluable for identifying how the family connects with other known MacLeod lines.

The author would be very pleased to hear from any reader who knows more of this family.⁵¹ Perhaps it may be possible to add further detail regarding the children of George and Malcolm to that already provided by Matheson in his original article.

⁵⁰ For example, the author's great-great-great-great grandfather, James Cumming, was born in Moray in 1782 and enlisted with the army in 1801 for unlimited service. Having been seriously injured he was discharged from the army, returning home in 1820 with a pension. Two years later he married Gordonetta Sutor who was 16 years younger, by whom he went on to have nine children.

⁵¹ He can be contacted by email: cummingwj@hotmail.com

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