



The Virginia Highlander

Newsletter of the Saint Andrew's Society Williamsburg, Virginia

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Summer-Fall 1971

Gerald P. Finn, Editor

The Fall Ceilidh

We remind you that the Saint Andrew's Fall "Ceilidh" will be held on Saturday, the second day of October, starting at 6:30 P.M. at the Mermaid Tavern, Jamestown, Virginia.

The "Ceilidh" is, of course, a time for good fellowship, with piping, eating, drinking, dancing, and enjoying yourself in the best way. The "necessities of life" will be available in the usual quantity. If you plan on imbibing, be sure to tell the good wife to be prepared to drive home--then you can really let yourself go without regrets. Guests and prospective members will be most welcome.

The decorations will be a recognition of the harvest season. As you may know, the old pagan Harvest Home Festival persisted among the country folk in some areas of Scotland even down to the 19th Century. They probably weren't aware that they were acting out the age-old ritual of the Feast of Demeter, to ensure a good harvest for the coming year. They were merely following the ways of their fathers in observing the "Calleach" and having a real good time doing it.

CEUD MİLTE FAİLTE

(One Hundred Thousand Welcomes)

To Our New Members ! ! ! !

*These forms may be cut out
and inserted in your loose-leaf
roster of members*

Duncan, Bruce Grigg
Apt. 32, Village Green
Jamestown Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185

College Student at
William and Mary

MacDonald, Alistair Sinclair
Apt. 11, 881 Cloverleaf Lane
Newport News, VA 23601

Management Consultant

MacGregor, Ian Hitchcock
4208 Montreal Avenue
Route 1
Prince George, VA 23875

His father, our member. Rob Roy
MacGregor has entered him for
membership on his 18th birthday,
February 18, 1976.

Offley, John Brockenborough
109 John Tyler Highway
Williamsburg, VA 23185

College Student at
Virginia Military Institute

Bierer, Howard T.
159 West Queens Drive
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Captain U.S. Navy (retired)

MacGillivray, Roderick P.
The Main
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Student at
William and Mary

*Many thanks to Mrs. Anna Richardson & Mrs. Margaret Waite for their
assistance in producing this issue of The Virginia Highlander*

Clan Donald

The Clan Donald with all its branches and septs is the most powerful Clan in Scotland. It is known as one of the "small" clans but they are members along with Clan Rory and Clan Dugall of the great family of Siol Cuinn, according to Skene's, "The Highlanders of Scotland," published in 1837.

The progenitor of all of the MacDonalds was Somerled, Regulus of the Isles who ruled in the 12th Century and expelled the Norsemen from the Western Isles.

The origin of the name Donald was the Gaelic Domhnall, meaning World Ruler.

While the tartans of the various branches of the family vary considerably, the clan badges are generally similar. Described as "out of a coronet a hand in armour fessways, holding by its point a cross crosslett fitchy, gules," it is worn by followers of MacDonalds, MacDonalds of the Isles and MacDonalds of Sleat. The MacDougals--cousins--clan badge is similar. The MacDonalds of Clan Randal use a badge "on a castle triple towered, an arm in armour, embowed, holding a sword, proper." The crest badge of the MacDonnells of Glengarry has a "raven, proper, perched on a rock, azure," and the MacDonnells of Keppoch a saltire cross on a shield. All of the branches use the same motto, "per mare per terras," (by sea and by land), except Clan Randal whose motto is "(old) gainsay who dare."

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The genealogy of the Clan Donald is an extremely thorny one, with "authorities" at variance somewhat but it seems that the following is generally accepted.

The progenitor, Somerled, Regulus of the Isles, was killed in the Battle of Renfrew in 1164 when his army fought that of Malcolm IV. He was succeeded by his son, Reginald, Lord of the Isles. Reginald's brother, Dugall, founded the Clan MacDugall. At the death of Reginald, his son, Donald, "de Isla" followed him and died in 1289. He was succeeded by his son, Angus, who had two sons, Alexander who married a daughter of the last male descendant of Dugall and sided with the MacDugalls of Lorne against Bruce, and Angus Og who followed Bruce and after Bannockburn was awarded all of the possessions of his brother Alexander.

Angus Og had two sons--John Og, progenitor of the Glencoe family of MacDonalds, and John, Lord of the Isles, who withdrew allegiance to the Scottish throne until the reign of David II (1271-1329). He had divorced his wife, Amy, heiress of Clan MacRury, and married Margaret, daughter of the High Steward, who later became Robert II (1371-1390).

John, Lord of the Isles, had a son, Donald, second Lord of the Isles. He married a daughter of the Countess of Ross and died in 1423. They had Alexander, Earl of Ross, who died in 1448. Following him was his son, John, fourth Lord of the Isles. The Lordship of the Isles was forfeited to the crown in 1493 and John died without legitimate issue in 1498.

Succession to the Chiefship passed to the MacDonald of Sleat, descended from Hugh, son of Alexander, third Lord of the Isles. Hugh died in 1498, succeeded by his son, John, died in 1502. Donald, third of Sleat, was murdered in 1506. Donald Gruamach was fourth of Sleat, succeeded by Donald Gorm, fifth of Sleat, who claimed the Lordship of the Isles and the Earldom of Ross. In an attempt to capture Eileandonnan Castle, he was killed in 1539.

Donald Gormson, sixth of Sleat, died in 1585, and his successor, Donald Gorm Mor (The Great), seventh of Sleat, was taken prisoner in a battle with the MacLeans, heavily fined in Edinburgh and released. He died without issue in 1616 and his nephew, Sir Donald, eighth of Sleat, was the first Baronet of Sleat. His lands were forfeited for his part in the 1715 Rising.

The Clan Ranald MacDonalds trace their ancestry to Ranald, younger son of John, first Lord of the Isles, and from him came the Houses of Moidart, Morar, Knoidart and Glengarry.

During the 1400s there were bloody feuds among the families of the MacDonalds and on the death of Ranald Bane (White), fifth Chief, the clan would not support his son, Ranald's claim to the Chiefship, but named John of Moidart Chief. The clans and families chose sides with the Lovat Frazers on Ranald's side, while John was supported by Clan Ranald, the MacDonnells of Keppoch, and Clan Cameron. In 1544 the Battle of Blar-na-Leine (Field of the Shirts) was fought. John of Moidart won and kept the Chiefship. He died in 1584. At the Battle of Killiecrankie (1689), 500 men were led by

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the young Chief who was only sixteen years old. Clan Ranald were strong supporters of the Jacobite cause and after Culloden, Prince Charles took refuge in Clan Ranald territory before embarking for France. While there he was hidden and protected by a famous member of the MacDonalds--Flora.

The MacDonnells of Glengarry, previously mentioned, trace their ancestry to Ranald's son, Donald, who with his brothers had their lands seized by their uncle, Godfrey, whose son, Alexander, was executed in 1427. The Glengarry lands then reverted to the Crown and they became "Crown tenants." Always Jacobites, 600 joined Prince Charles in 1745 and the Chief and his son, Angus, were made prisoners in the Tower of London. The sixteenth Chief's sons emigrated to New Zealand. The Gaelic name, "Mac 'c Alasdair," is from Alasdair, fourth of Glengarry.

The MacDonnells of Keppoch and Garragach trace their ancestry to Alastair Carrach, third son of John, Lord of the Isles, who was also father of the Clan Ranald and Glengarry families and a grandson of King Robert II. In the early 1400s there began a long feud with the Clan MacIntosh, whose Chief was head of Clan Chattan. It was a bloody affair resulting in the outlawry of Ranald, Ninth of Keppoch, who served in the Swedish Army. The eleventh Chief, Donald Glas, served in the Spanish Army, but Coll "of the Cows," fifteenth Chief, avoided capture for forty years by the MacIntoshes and held land in Lochaber by right of the sword. His son, Alexander, joined Prince Charles in 1745 and they were first to

draw English blood at Glenfinnan, where Charlie's standard was raised. The last Chief in the direct line died in 1889.

There are a total of 312 septs of the families according to "Scots Kith and Kin."

There have been many eminent men of the name of MacDonald, descendants of the various families, not only in Scotland but all over the world.

Mr. Nestor J. MacDonald, past President of the Saint Andrew's Society of New York and Commissioner of Clan Donald Society of the United States is President of Grandfather Mountain Games at Linnville, North Carolina. As the guest of Highland Games in July, 1971, was the present Chief of Clan Donald, young Lord MacDonald and his lovely wife, of the Isle of Skye.

We have enclosed a business reply envelope for you to send your subscription for the new HIGHLANDER, a fine, ambitious magazine for Scotsmen in America. We know you will enjoy receiving it. We hope there will be reports of the activities of our own Society in its pages. This is not to be confused with our own VIRGINIA HIGHLANDER newsletter.

We are informed that John MacDougall of Norfolk is recovering from his accident and has been able to return to work. We are so pleased. Best wishes, John.