



CLAN EWEN SOCIETY
Bulletin

No. 21 APRIL 1989

SCOTTISH INTERNATIONAL
GATHERING
AND
WORLD CONGRESS OF SCOTS
MAY 6th - 14th 1989

I N V E R N E S S

PLEASE VISIT OUR BOOTH AT THE ICE RINK

A. G. M. SATURDAY 3rd JUNE, 1989

AT 2.00 p.m. IN

PARK LODGE HOTEL, 32 PARK TERRACE,
STIRLING

The International Gathering of the Clans at Inverness from 6–14th May, should be a great occasion. No matter from where you come, we hope to be there to welcome you at our own Clan booth.

Ever been to Inverness? Probably not, but it is well worth a visit. As I write, it is very much in the news. The weather up there at the present time (and as usual) has been foul: but they have had it worse than most. The river Ness, fed by countless tributaries, has overflowed its bank, swept away the railway bridge and caused untold damage. Everyone is blaming everyone else – especially the Hydro Board – but by the time you get there, all will be as well as possible. The weather should be good. May and October are curiously two of the best months in certain parts of Scotland. The sun may shine brightly and dry everything up and show the glory of all our cherished tartans.

About the only person not blamed for the floods, at least in the Press has been the Loch Ness Monster. “Nessie” usually inhabits Loch Ness further down the loch at a point opposite Castle Urquhart. But he or she has been seen in many different parts. Even the great St. Columba had a confrontation with the Jolly Beast not far from Inverness; Nessie had picked up a man and was about to make a comfortable breakfast out of him, when St. Columba appeared and told him to “Put him down”, which the beastie wisely did. Columba was not a man to be trifled with. Do I believe in the Loch Ness Monster? I just don't know. I keep an open mind. There have been far too many sightings for it to be ‘just a tree trunk in the water’. My father used to know the Loch Ness area very well as a young man in the 1890's when travelling for the family firm, (we had a shop in Fort William and one in Inverness). He used to tell me that long before the popular outcry and interest got up over Nessie, the local people spoke about him quite naturally as part of the scenery. I gather that you rarely see him if you go deliberately to try and catch a glimpse, but if you are passing along the lochside and thinking of something entirely different (like Stocks and Shares, the Weather or Last Night's T.V.) – then he is apt to materialize and scare the living daylights.

But Inverness is not just Nessie. It is the gateway to the great North West and North East of Scotland. It really does make a splendid centre for going to many lovely places. Get the weather and there is nothing—but nothing—like the far North West and East of Scotland. You have a joy in store. By the way a good number of MacEwens (spelt in that way) come from the Inverness area. And there will be people at the Gathering who will no doubt be glad to help you in your researches.

Well, whether you come or not, our thoughts are often with you far and near. But if you can come, there will be a right welcome for you by your fellow MacEwens at the Clan Booth in Inverness in May.

The Clansman's Badge is derived from the Chief's personal Crest which he gave to his clansmen mounted on a strap, which in ancient times the clansman fastened to his upper arm with the buckle, demonstrating membership of the chief's Clan. Today clansmen and clanswomen wear their chief's Crest encircled with the strap-and-buckle, bearing their chief's Motto or Slogan, on a bonnet badge or sash brooch.

In Scotland all Arms and Crests are PERSONAL. There is no such thing as a "Family" Coat of Arms. Even the popular name "Clan Crest" is a misnomer as there is no such thing as a "Clan" Crest. The Crest is an adjunct to a Coat of Arms and is formed of a device and motto. It is impossible to own a Crest without first owning Arms on a shield. Crest Badges are only for Chiefs of Clans, Chieftains of septs of Clans, and Armigers who have recorded their own Coat of Arms. They have the exclusive right to wear their Crests as badges, either *simpliciter* without circlet, motto or feathers behind the badge; OR, as is more usual, surrounded with a *plain* circlet inscribed with his motto, with the appropriate number of eagle's feathers behind the badge, i.e. three for a Chief, two for a Chieftain and one for an Armiger.

No Chief of the name of MacEwan has ever recorded Arms, and therefore a Clansman's badge cannot derive from this usual source. We must take a brief look at the clan history to determine the origin and bona fides of the Clansman's Badge used by the MacEwans today. The original name is Ewen. It is derived from the Gaelic Eoghainn, meaning "well born" (Gk. Eugenēs; Lat. Eugenius). Later forms of the name are, Ewan, Ewen, Ewing, MacEwan and MacEwen. The Clan includes all those of the same surname and the "septs". These are other families within the Clan (i.e. distant cousins and connections) sometimes having different surnames. Persons bearing the name and traceable to the localities known to have been occupied by the early Clan, its septs and descendants, are of the same race and probably sprung from the MacEwens of Otter. All would wear the same Clansman's Badge.

The earliest Chief of the clan, of whom there is any mention, was MacEwan I. of Otter (MhicEoghainn na h-Oitrich) who flourished about 1200. From then until the middle of the 15th century the Clan possessed a tract of country about twenty-five miles square comprising most of the district of Cowal. The last of the Otter Chiefs, Swene IX, granted a charter of certain lands of Otter to Duncan, son of Alexander Campbell, beginning the transfer of the MacEwen estates to the Campbells of Argyll. Thereafter, in 1432 Swene resigned the barony of Otter to James I.

Any Scot who had Arms was required by the Act of 1672 to record them in the Public Register of All Arms and Bearings in Scotland ("Lyon Register" for short). The determination of the heraldic

elements which comprise the Crest Badge is entirely the responsibility of the Lord Lyon. The device and motto submitted by the petitioner are rigorously recorded in the Lyon Register as part of the matriculation of Arms, but the Crest Badge as such is not recorded.

For at least the past two hundred years no man has been issued a grant of personal Arms without the grant of a Crest. There are many early Coats of Arms rightly in use today without a Crest. Some distinction goes with these because the Arms have to be at least two hundred years old. An example is that of John McEwan (Mackewan) of Muckly who recorded Arms in 1742 without recording a Crest. It is said that he laid claim to the Chiefship but never established his right thereto.

All of the Ewing Arms are founded on those of Walter Ewen or Ewing of Craigtoun. He belonged to the family of Keppoch in Dunbartonshire, and by marriage to the eldest daughter of Bryson of Craigtoun obtained that estate and took the Arms of Bryson. His achievement appears on a tombstone of 1600 in Bonhill churchyard. Crest: a demi lion rampant, in his dexter paw a mullet gu. — Motto: Audaciter (Boldly). In succession five Ewing Baronets of Ballikinrain, Stirling, and the first (1963) Ewing Baronet of Hendon, in Middlesex, inherited this Crest. The latter made a great heraldic leap into the nuclear age by recording as part of his shield of Arms the following:— “in base a representation of the path of the electrons rotating round a nucleus gu”. Another individualist was William McEwan of Glenboig, a writer in Edinburgh of the Lennox sept, who recorded Arms in 1796 but did not use the traditional symbols, devices or the motto which became typical of MacEwan Coats of Arms. His Crest:- a dexter arm couped at the shoulder, the elbow resting on the wreath and grasping a scymitar all ppr. Motto:- Pervicax Recte (Firm and proper).

John McEwan of Glasgow, a sugar refiner, merchant and shipowner who recorded Arms in 1847 took for his Crest:- an old oak stump sprouting afresh, and for his Motto:- ‘Reviresco’ (I flourish again). These symbols had been known to MacEwans everywhere for a long time previously having been used as a badge on seals. They were used as a means of identification, before writing was common, in business and commerce, and were often handed down from father to son or heir. Sometimes they became Crests when a person of the name took out Arms. The case of McEwan of Glasgow is an instance in point. A Coat of Arms being the exclusive property of the grantee, it descends to his eldest lineal representative. In this way his son William McEwan, Member of Parliament for the central Division of Edinburgh, used his father’s Crest when he recorded Arms in 1886.

Although this device and motto have become the traditional Crest of MacEwan Arms, Glenboig excepted, it is not exclusive to the MacEwans. Ample evidence exists that the heraldic elements for some Coats of Arms were regional rather than familial. Trunks of trees have

in some instances been assigned to Arms, but it is as a Crest that the oak stump sprouting afresh is most frequent. It has been issued as a Crest to more than forty Armigers of names other than MacEwan. It also was not unusual, in the early recording of Arms, for unrelated individuals to have the same Motto. Latitude was allowed to Petitioners for Arms to choose one with which they were already familiar. Nowadays the Lord Lyon insists on a variation where a Motto has already been granted. But this had already occurred by issuing the Motto 'Reviresco' to six Crests belonging to Arms other than those of McEwan. There are only two other recorded Crests having the same device *and* Motto as any McEwan Arms.

The first McEwen to record Arms in this century (1908) was Robert Finnie McEwan, Esq., of Marchmont, Berwickshire and of Bardrochat, Ayrshire. He, and his descendants, recorded the oak tree stump sprouting afresh Crest and the 'Reviresco' Motto. When these family seats became a barony his eldest son, Sir John Helias Finnie McEwen, was created the 1st Baronet. He was followed by his son, Sir James Napier Finnie McEwen, 2nd Baronet, who was succeeded by his brother, Sir Robert Lindley McEwen, 3rd and present Baronet.

This writer discovered in 1983 that a Glasgow Manufacturing Jeweller was marketing a McEwan Clansman's Badge having the territorial designation of Muckly. This was bogus on three counts; first, this McEwan did not record a Crest, second, he was not Chief of the Clan, and third, a Chief of a Clan need not have a territorial designation. In an attempt to clarify this situation an exchange of correspondence was initiated with the manufacturer with no satisfactory conclusion reached. The matter was then referred to the Court of the Lord Lyon who, on July 20th, 1983, made and recorded the following decision:-

"No Chief of the name of MacEwen has ever recorded Arms, and therefore a Crest Badge for the MacEwans cannot derive from this usual source. However, all the early MacEwans who have recorded Arms also recorded the same Crest, the oak stump sprouting afresh, and the same Motto 'REVIRESCO'. Therefore the Lord Lyon has decided that if any person successfully laid claim to the Chiefship in the future, those would be the Crest and Motto he would be given as Chief. Therefore they may correctly form the Crest Badge for MacEwens in anticipation of their Chief being discovered."

In a separate decision, in a related matter, the Lord Lyon has agreed that the Crest Badge may be used on writing paper by a member of the Clan, but only if he prints under the Crest Badge, '*A member of Clan McEwan*', which indicates that it is the Crest of a Chief and not the Crest of the person using the badge. Alternatively, the Gaelic, *An Cìrean Ceann Cinnidh*, may be used.

EDITOR'S NOTES

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR NEXT BULLETIN TO BE IN THE HANDS OF THE EDITOR BY SATURDAY 30th SEPT. 1989.

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FAMILY LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. & Mrs. A. G. M. McEwan

STOP PRESS

Pipe Band Contest now moved to Saturday 6th May, 1989

INTERNATIONAL GATHERING INFORMATION

The conference programme which will run from Monday to Friday at Eden Court will include:

The diaspora of the Scots – an historical perspective!

The impact of Scots in their adopted countries!

Economic development in present day Scotland!

*Education and recreation in Scotland today –
prospects for the future!*

Diversification of land use:

*The political future of Scotland – prospects
for the economy!*

Scotland after 1992 – a look to the future.

ENTERTAINMENT – During the week there will be 3 concerts of a Scottish nature at the Ice Rink. Another concert will be organised at the Eden Court Theatre.

STONE MOUNTAIN HIGHLAND GAMES, U.S.A., Oct. 1988 – Congratulation to Pipe Major Barry Ewen who was successful in obtaining a first and second place in the solo piping competitions.

SIR WILLIAM MACEWEN 1848 – 1924. *Phyllis Marjorie McEwan*

The Clan Society have been given a Biography of Sir William Macewen by Dr. A. K. Bowman –
Sir William Macewen was a surgeon of international fame – a pioneer in the surgery of the Brain, Bone and Spinal Cord. At the age of 40 he was Chief Surgeon in the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow and at the age of 74, he was Regius Professor of Surgery at Glasgow University and Senior Surgeon at the Western Infirmary, Glasgow. 50 years ahead of his time, he was the first surgeon to remove a lung, in 1895.

It is interesting to us that Sir William's great grandfather, Donald, born in 1752 resided at Otter Ferry, the centre of our Clan Land, being a farmer and owner of a sailing vessel – employed in Coastwise trade. Donald's son, John, married Janet Stevenson from Ardmaleish Farm in the Island of Bute. John and his wife eventually settled in Rothesay (the capital of Bute) at Woodend Cottage beside the Skeoch Wood. The cottage is no longer there, but a plaque marks the site.

The youngest of 12 children, William received his primary education in Rothesay. Then, on the death of his mother, he moved to live with his aunt in Glasgow, becoming a pupil of the Collegiate School, finally achieving a place at the University of Glasgow to study medicine at the age of 17. The rest of his life is Medical history.

Note Sir William's family always spelt their name MACEWEN.

In ancient days the Barony of Otter on the east coast of Loch Fyne, belonged to the Macewens, one of the original families in the County of Argyll. In the 15th century Clan Campbell took by force the lands of Otter, the Macewens were scattered, but we have proof that Sir William's ancestors continued to reside at Otter until the 18th century. McEwan/McEwen is still a common name in the Island of Bute, and it is interesting to remember that Archie McEwan, our first Clan Secretary, was a native of Bute.

I have the acquaintance of two distinguished ladies in their 80's and 90's, natives of Bute, Miss Margaret Marshall who was assistant nurse to Sir William during the First World War, and Miss Dorothy Marshall who is an Historian and Archaeologist, the first to dig at the ruins of 'McEwen Castle' and record a paper on the site. They tell me they were frequent visitors to "Garrochty" – Sir William's country house in the South West of the Island, where they enjoyed the company of Sir William's children and all their pets of rabbits and goats. Sir William was a great believer in goats' milk, being free of the Tuberculosis bacillus. All the children were encouraged to drink goats' milk. One of Sir William's grandsons at school in Edinburgh had goats' milk sent to the school daily. Sir William's daughter, Janet, became a well known breeder of goats.

Sir William was one of the few Surgeons to emphasise the importance of nurses to doctors, and he took great interest in their well being. He was a handsome man, possessed of great strength and energy, his students revered him for his painstaking skill and instruction. Here is an anecdote which illustrates his character:- He was travelling from Glasgow to Carlisle by train, when a very drunk man entered the coach and alarmed the passengers. Sir William stood up and commanded the man to open his mouth, whereupon Sir William promptly dislocated his jaw, which kept him quiet for the rest of the journey. It is recorded that Sir William restored the man's jaw before he left the train.

We have reason to be proud of the genius of a very distinguished 'McEwen'.

A note of interest for our Australian members – one of Sir William's brothers emigrated to Queensland, and his descendants are still living there. Another anecdote – during his distinguished visit to Australia, he was taken to a Race Meeting, and was most interested to note that few men there were as tall as himself – interest in the races – nil!!!

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Sir William Macewen: by Dr. A. K. Bowman (Both distinguished

Macewen of Glasgow: by Dr. C. Duguid (Macewen students)

The Man in the White Coat: by Dr. H. A. Macewen (one of his sons)

Personal Reminiscences: by Capt. W. R. Macdonald (his grandson)

Personal Reminiscences: by Miss Margaret & Miss Dorothy Marshall

P. S. It is not generally known that Sir William Macewen was a pioneer in the founding of the Princess Louise Hospital for Limbless Ex-service men, with the financial help from Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll – one of Queen Victoria's daughters. Sir William's genius for organisation and administration laid the foundation of one of West Scotland's most famous Hospitals.

Phyllis McEwan.

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