

THE CLAN EWEN SOCIETY *Bulletin*

No.5 — April 1981

A Note from the Chairman and Editor

A large number of the contributions to this magazine are signed by me, and rather more are written by me. This is of course not surprising considering I am acting as Editor. Apart from my contributions, I have received many from Archie (not all his own, some from journals, etc.), and also from Mrs. and Miss Williamson, our Secretaries. Some of these contributions have been published, some are being held for future publication. Some are too long for publication in the Bulletin, and will have to go into the proposed volumes on celebrated MacEwens/Ewens, of the present generation, or of earlier times.

What I want to say to all our readers is this. The near-domination of these pages by the existing Committee is not my choice, and I would welcome contributions from members, on any topics which are likely to interest our readers: family history, personal anecdotes, ideas for possible study by the Clan Society ... So if you have anything at all to contribute which you think might interest our readers, do please write in. Remember, though, we have a backlog of items for publication, and cannot guarantee to put in any contributed item in the next number. We shall try to publish such items more or less in order of immediate current importance.

We repeat our invitation to send in any items of family or local news which you think might appear in these pages. One or two figure in this issue, but we would like to have more.

Remember, we have great hopes that this journal may achieve the distinction of being eventually bound in volume form, and in this case it will form an invaluable source of material on all the activities and ramifications of the Clan throughout the world. We are not confined to publishing contributions in

English. If you have any contributions to make in the Gaelic language, send them in, and be assured that we can deal with them.

Douglas M.C. MacEwan

A town called MacEwen ...

The contribution from Stephen McEwen on page 38, triggered me into thinking, 'Why not consult a good gazetteer to find out just how many towns and other features of the world's geography are called after our Clan?' So off I went to consult the Times Atlas, which is just about the most complete atlas published in this country.

The answer to the above question is, 'Quite a number.' Ewens and MacEwens have obviously played (considering their small numbers) quite a worthy role in discovering new lands and founding townships.

I have in fact discovered seven towns, three islands and one mountain! But no McEwensville, Pennsylvania! In fact, no town at all, called McEwensville, Ewensville or Ewingsville in all the world!

Clearly, the list is incomplete, and includes only the more important places. McEwensville, Pennsylvania, has been in existence for 100 years, so it should figure on the list if it were considered important enough. Consequently, there may be quite a number of other smallish places that are missed out. Perhaps our readers could get to work, and let me know of any others that they may have heard of.

I give the list below together with the map references, so you can check them out. Some of you may actually **know** these places. If so, do please write to me and give me any particulars you have — date of foundation (if a town), founder, history, population, local industries — anything you can find out and that might be of interest.

In fact, if any of our members live anywhere near one of these towns they might care to pay a visit and get information on the spot. Perhaps they could even send me a few photographs as a matter of interest. A further point occurs to me: presumably, all these towns were either founded by a member of our Clan or

at any rate must have close connections with somebody of the name. We are of course still hoping to be able to establish a Clan Headquarters near the original Clan territory of Otter Ferry on Loch Fyne. However, a possibility arises of establishing a small Clan Headquarters or museum or something of that sort in one of these towns which already have connections with the Clan. This is a point that our readers in the USA — and in Queensland, if there are any, may wish to consider. Some of these towns are rather isolated, but the town of Ewan in Queensland is only 30 miles from the coast and near to Townsville.

There are quite a number of Clan Members, I know, in the Otago region of New Zealand, and some of them will, no doubt, know of Ewing Island which is about 100 miles south from there. Reports would be welcome.

Some reflections occur to me ... With the exception of an Antarctic island, every single locality is either in the USA or in the Australia-New Zealand area. Nowhere in Canada! Nowhere in Scotland! And not a single river or lake! Pity, that, considering the origins of the Clan in Scotland, and that, like all Scots, they must love lakes/lochs. Can it be put right? Is there still some unnamed small lake somewhere in the far north of Australia? ... Anyway, here is the list.

(1) Towns

McEwan, Tennessee:	36°4' N,	87°38' W
McEwen, Oregon:	44°42' N,	118°5' W
Ewan, Queensland:	19°6' S,	145°50' E
Ewan, Washington (state):	47°0' N,	117°45' W
Ewing, Kentucky:	38°22' N,	83°53' W
Ewing, Missouri:	40°0' N,	91°43' W
Ewing, Nebraska:	42°16' N,	98°20' W

(2) Islands

Ewan Island, Alaska:	62°27' N,	145°50' W
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Ewing Island, Auckland Islands Group, N.Z. 50°32' S, 166°19' E

Ewing Island, Antarctica: 60°55' S, 61°10' W

(3) Mountains

Mount Ewing, Northern Territory, Australia: 22°56' S, 137°10' W

Some of these features have minor geographical distinctions. Ewing, Missouri, is exactly on the fortieth parallel of latitude. Mount Ewing, N.T., is practically on the Tropic of Capricorn. Remains to be seen if our readers can find any more solid grounds for distinction...

D.M.C.M.

Clan Property Donation

We have had a very welcome donation towards the proposed Clan property, from Charles E. McEwan of Santa Clara, California.

Our readers will be interested to know that Charles McEwan is the President of the Ramtek Corporation, which is one of the companies in the very fast-growing field of computer systems. Their speciality is colour-graphics for the graphical representation of computer data.

Mr. McEwan has sent me a copy of an interesting article from the *San José Mercury* of April 1st 1979, which says that one of the best things which happened to him was a disastrous fire in 1976, which gutted the manufacturing facility and ruined all of the integrated circuits. Although this fire cost Ramtek many sales, in the end its benefit outweighed its losses. 'For one thing,' said Charles McEwan, 'we got out of our old buildings and into a new one which helped considerably in raising our credibility.' There was also a less tangible change in attitude: 'It was a turning point for the Company - since then every quarter has been profitable.'

How you can help us - very easily!

We had a paragraph in the last bulletin asking for your aid in collecting information about members of the Clan whom you see mentioned in your reading.

So far we have had no reaction to this. May I once again appeal to you for your help and point out that this may be done at virtually no cost in time or trouble, and could lead eventually to the building up of a most important file.

I have been led to put in this item by a reference which I noticed through my casual reading recently. It is in a biography called **All To The Good** by W.L. Fraser, one of the leading London merchant bankers. In a list of board members of the war-time U.K. Commercial Corporation, he mentions 'Mr. G.A. McEwen of the Cooperative Wholesale Society'. I immediately marked the page in the book and will file this among my data.

Mr. McEwen must have been quite an important personality in the Cooperative movement and could well figure in the volume of Ewen/McEwen biographies which we are proposing.

Now, I feel sure that many of our readers will turn up references like this and may well just forget about them. If you would just mark the page and then jot down on a piece of paper the necessary information and send it on to me, you will be helping the Society very much at very little cost to yourself in time and trouble - 'in **All To The Good** by W.L. Fraser, chapter 12, page 171' - that is all I need. You can simply put the slip in the post to me - or alternatively, if you expect to get several references of this sort, you could collect them in an envelope or file and post them all together.

If you see a reference in a newspaper, you could simply cut out the item, jot down the name and date of the newspaper, and send it on to me.

I do hope very much that you will try and cooperate in this way. Every little item of this sort will add up and will contribute to the success of an eventual volume of biographies.

D.M.C.M.

Wedding of Clan Member

The wedding took place on 14th February 1981 at 4330 Lennox Drive, Coconut Grove, Florida, of Pamela Marie Coté and Barry William MacEwan.

We wish them all happiness for the future.

'McEwensville'

We have just received an interesting letter from a young member of the Society, Stephen McEwen, of 1210 Concord Avenue, Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

He mentions that there is a town in Pennsylvania called **McEwensville**. We think this will interest our readers as it may well be the only town of that name in the world. Stephen tells me that the town was formerly called Pinegrove, but was changed to **McEwensville** about 100 years ago, being named after a local hero called **Alex McEwen**.

Stephen has promised to try and obtain a photograph of the sign on the city limits for publication in the bulletin, and is trying to find out the full history of the town for us.

If any other readers know of a town with a similar name we hope they will write to us about it.

Newspoint

We have just had an interesting letter from Mrs. Lynn MacEwen of Wilmington, Delaware, whose husband is the well-known orthopaedic surgeon George Dean MacEwen, of the Alfred I. DuPont Institute. She tells us that her husband and family will be visiting the U.K. in April for a medical congress.

Mrs. MacEwen also informs us that a recent 'Mrs. America' was called 'MacEwen'.

History of Clan Ewen

The much delayed reprint of this history by R.S.T. MacEwen is now finally ready, and copies will be sent to subscribers. Further copies are available at £8 including postage. The volume is attractively bound in Old McEwen tartan, and is supplied in a slip case.

Copies will be on sale at the Edinburgh Gathering.

Recollections of Daniel McEwen (contd. from Bulletin No.3)

I remember the kilts being on me when I was a boy. It was not tartan but "Hielan'Plaiding". My mother spun the wool and it was sent to Houston, Greenock, to be woven and then she made the kilts.

I had porridge and milk in the morning, potatoes and herring at dinner time, porridge again at night. There were no tea at that time. When my mother married tea cost 9/- a pound.

I was seven or eight years old when my father died, and I went to herd cattle with James Weir, Achatengain, and I stayed three years there. A year after my father's death the family left the schoolhouse and my mother had a house built for her at Stronefian, called "Tomdariv" - a heather thatched house it was. There was a school at Stronefian for the family and they went out to herd cows also.

My father taught both Gaelic and English, and Peter Sinclair was the next schoolmaster at Clachan after he died.

After being three years at Achatengain Dan went away to be a tailor with John McLean, piper, at Daleek for five or eight years. You can see the ruins still of the house at Daleek. There I learnt the pipes as well as the tailor's trade. There was another tailor in the Glen called Donald Black and all the men got their clothes made by the tailors. There were also two weavers in the Glen -- two brothers, Duncan and Donald MacLean. The women all spun the wool at home and many sent it to Houston for weaving. Houston charged 1/- a yard for weaving or 1/6d for dyeing, spinning and weaving. It was cheaper to send the wool to Houston. The weavers charged 4d or 5d a yard.

They were brewing at Lephin Keeman. They were brewing whiskey there, and it was Neil Weir -- Nancy's father -- and Sandy Weir a cousin of mine that were doing it. The gauger was stopping over at Otter Ferry and he got word what was going on, and he came over and my Uncle Peter Weir met him and took him into his house where the brewing was going on all the time in the old byre without, while the gauger was within.

My uncle treated him well and put him to bed, and when he left in the morning they put two bottles of whisky in his pocket when he went back to Otter. The gauger "kent" fine all about it, but as he did not see it, he could not report it.

There was one still where the pier is now, one at Lephinkeeman, one at Achdachiranmore, one at Achatengain, one at Lephinkill. They would get 9/- a gallon for the whisky, without a drop of water in it.

They were brewing one time at Achdachiranmore and somebody reported them, and the gaugers — two of them — came from Dunoon. The old Baron was at Stronefian at the time, and hearing the gaugers were coming he sent his man through the hill to the McKellars Achdachiranmore to warn them that the gaugers were coming. The Old Baron took them in and gave them dinner to detain them, and when they got to Achdachiranmore there was nothing to be seen but old barrels.

(to be continued)

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