

THE CLAN EWEN SOCIETY *Bulletin*

No. 6 - February 1982

A Note from the Chairman and Editor

This number is late, and to those of you who wondered if it was ever going to turn up, I offer my heartfelt apologies. Especial apologies to our transatlantic readers, for whom the Bulletin is the only way of keeping in touch. My difficulties in keeping up to date make me realise what a magnificent job Michael MacEwen put in on the original American bulletin. I confess that I kept saying "Can't manage it now -- well, perhaps next week". I would like nothing better than to devote a lot of my time to the Bulletin. Unfortunately, I have a full-time job in which I always seem to be dealing with a backlog of work.

I am going to try and make amends by bringing out two numbers close together, and will then try and keep up a regular sequence. The Society has now decided to form a small committee which will assist me in collecting and editing material, and this should be helpful.

Do please remember that all these Bulletins have pages numbered sequentially, so they can eventually be bound, and I hope many of you will collect them for this purpose. I will be able to arrange for binding when the time comes, as it should do quite soon. I will then provide a title page, maybe also an index.

History of Clan Ewen

We have one volume left of the original binding, in old MacEwen tartan. Your orders (at £8 each) are still welcome. When the original binding is exhausted, we shall produce further copies, if enough orders are in hand. It's too late for Christmas, but remember the possibility of presents for special occasions.

Archie McEwan

Most of our members will know that our Treasurer Archie McEwan, died on July 4th of this year. Archie was one of the small group who met in 1967 to found the Society, and since that time has brought to it his enthusiasm and, above all, his great knowledge of clan affairs, and of sources of information among the periodical literature. I still have quite a pile of material which he sent me, and which I am working through, and presenting selections for our readers. His loss will be keenly felt by all of us. I feel sure all members of the Clan Society will join in offering our sympathy to his widow and to his married son and daughter.

Douglas M.C. MacEwan

The notice below, about Archie McEwan is extracted from the Kilmarnock Standard.

Obituary — Archie McEwan

Mr McEwan was very closely involved in the community, both in his professional and private life.

After working with the Bank of Scotland in Motherwell, Buckie, Lamlash, Glasgow, Greenock, Innerleithen and Kilmarnock, he was manager of the Mauchline branch from its opening in 1950 until he retired in 1969, and in the whole of his 48½ years with the bank, he never lost a day's work through illness.

He had a keen interest in and a close association with the farming community, to which he gave valuable service as Secretary of the Mauchline Branch of the National Farmer's Union from 1953 to 1963 and for 13 years as Secretary and Treasurer of Sorn Parish Agricultural Society, playing a large part in organising the Catrine Show and having a special interest in arranging the Highland Dancing Competition.

In former years he was a member of the Arran Drama Association and treasured a gold watch presented to him there.

He was proud of being a Scot and upheld the Highland tradition as a founder member, Secretary and Treasurer

of the Kilmarnock branch of An Communn Gaidhealach and was a founder member and Treasurer of the Clan Ewan Society.

Locally, he was a Past President, Treasurer and Secretary of Mauchline Burns Club, had at various times been associated with the Horticultural Society, the Old Folk's Welfare Committee and was active in the original Community Council. He had a lively interest in local history and preserved much valuable information about past events and personalities which otherwise could have been lost.

The service at Masonhill Crematorium was attended by a very large number of mourners who came from a wide area to pay their last respects to a well-known and highly esteemed man, who, during his life, served the community well.

In the absence of the Rev. Dr. Morrice, on vacation, the service was conducted by the Rev. C. L. Johnston of Auchinleck, who paid tribute to Mr McEwan's many qualities.

Ewings in the United States

Again thanks to Dorothy for her very exhaustive notes on the Ewings in the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries in the United States. Her fascinating asides, and tales to illustrate her points, bring the whole period, and the people concerned, vividly to life. We talk easily these days of "The Strain of Modern Life". It is a very salutary experience to read Dorothy's notes and one is full of admiration for her forebears' hardihood. They are, indeed, ancestors of whom one can be justifiably proud.

CE

New Zealand

It is not often that we get such a mass of information as Mrs. Flora Buick of New Zealand sent us in her letter. Thanks a lot, Flora, and I feel sure that you will be amused to hear that when our Treasurer handed it to our Seannachie, Colin McEwan, he took one quick look and disappeared to his remote hideaway in

Argyll where he informs us, he is reading it in detail with the help of his reference books. We do appreciate the time and trouble you have taken, Flora, as it is letters such as your's and Dorothy's that will help us to sketch a broader picture of the Clan history. CME

Tartan Fabric

Readers may be interested in the following items which may be purchased direct from the manufacturer at reduced prices to Clan members.

WEAVER: D.C. Dalgliesh Ltd., Dunsdale Mill, Selkirk, Scotland. MacEwan, Ancient, Modern, and reproduction (muted) colours. The material is woven in pure wool worsted as follows:

Single width (28/29") wide; 16oz quality £7.80 yard, delivery 6/8 weeks; 11oz quality £7.60 yard, delivery 6/8 weeks; minimum order 4 yards.

Using this material 7 or 8 yards would be necessary for a Gent's kilt. The heavy quality is suitable for a kilt for everyday use. The lighter quality is suitable for ladies' and gents' trousers, kilted skirts, stoles and sashes, etc. Double width can also be obtained in the same qualities at the much cheaper price of £9.00 yard. The minimum order for this is unfortunately 30 yards.

Silk sashes are made to order: 12" x 90" £18.70 each. Delivery 3/4 weeks. 12" x 108" £19.00 each. Delivery 3/4 weeks. Headsquares are also available: wool, minimum of three £3.50 each. Silk, minimum of three £5.50 each.

All prices are correct at time of going to press.

To those of our readers, perhaps unfamiliar with muted tartan, we would describe the effect as a somewhat "weathered" shade of the original colours giving an overall effect of softer browns and tans replacing the green and a paler blue replacing the original.

The following items of Clan interest can be obtained direct from the Treasurer, again much below shop prices.

Gents' MacEwan tartan ties, ancient and modern £3.25. Boys' MacEwan tartan ties, ancient, £2.75. Scarves MacEwan tartan 100% new wool, £3.75.

Above items made by Lochcarron Products Ltd.

Clan Crest Badge (metal) £4.25.

Visitors From Afar

One of our committee members, David McEwan, who is Principal of a large technical college in Glasgow, had a chance meeting at a reception in

Edinburgh Castle in 1980 with Dr. Alec C. McEwen of Ottawa, Canada. Alec has an interesting profession as an International Boundary Commissioner mainly dealing with USA/Canadian border matters.

Recently we heard that Alec and some of his family are to visit Scotland in July 1982, and hope to visit the Kilfinan area. Although this will be a holiday time here, several of the Society members have offered their services as "contacts" to help visitors from afar if dates clash. If YOU hope to visit Scotland and would like a local guide/adviser, please make contact with any of us well before you arrive in Scotland. It may help if you can say where your Scottish background or friends are located when you write.

DME



At the Clan Gathering in Edinburgh, 1981. On the left is the Reverend Peter Ewen and on the right Mr. Neil MacLachlan of the U.S.A.

International Gathering, Scotland 1981

As announced in our Issue No. 4 this meeting was held in Edinburgh during the week ending Saturday, May 30th. The Clan Ewen had a stall there at which Clan Badges, Clan Scarves, the History of Clan Ewen and other items were on sale. Various members of the committee took part in the manning of this stall during the week and our photograph shows the Reverend Peter Ewen on one of these occasions. It will be seen that we shared a stall with the Clan MacLachlan. It was perhaps unfortunate that we did not get our original location upstairs in the Freemasons' Hall, but were relegated to the basement, where quite a number of visitors seemed to fail to penetrate. The occasion was an interesting one, but attendance on the whole rather disappointing. Following this meeting, there was an excursion to Loch Fyne, which is described elsewhere.

Recollections of Daniel McEwen (contd. from Bulletin No.5)

There was a big still at Ormidale in the wood above the house. There was old Neil Weir in it and Peter Weir, and old Ormidale "kent" fine they were at it, and he was getting the whisky from them himself. I was always told that one of those at this still was old Dan Himself! (M.B.C.)

There were heaps of people in the Glen when I was young -- sometimes two marriages in the month. On "Latha na bainnae" the company would be going to Clachan and my father would be going to tell the minister that they were coming -- that was at the old Manse which is now a wash-house. The company would be coming with a piper and a gun firing. You would hear them miles away. Campbell was the minister's name and everybody was married in the kirk at that time. They would play the pipes down to the kirkyard gate, not inside. The best man had to pay 1/- before they could get the kirk opened, for the scholars would go down and lock the kirk door when they heard the party coming so that they would not get in, and the shilling was for writing quills for the school. Then old Campbell the minister would come and marry them, and one man would be stationed at the door outside the kirkyard and as soon as the marriage was done someone inside gave a signal and

the man outside fired a shot, and the piper would play them up to the old public house -- the Inns it was called. They were served with a round of wine, and then the dancing commenced, and the minister Campbell and my father danced the first reel, and then the minister would go away, but my father would stop with the company. They would be married about 12 o'clock, and they would dance the whole night through till the morning. Maybe they would go home to where the bride was living and there would be supper prepared for them. Everyone that was bidden to the wedding sent something for the supper and there be plenty of whisky also. They had two days at a heap of the weddings in those days, and the next day they would be going up to Clachan again, dancing and playing and drinking.

There were hundreds and hundreds in the Glen when I was young. Captain Campbell of Glendaruel was giving a great shintying at Glendaruel on New Year's Day, and he was a splendid shintier was the laird himself, and there was a barrel of whiskey out at the end of the house, and you could take as much as you liked.

The people would be leaving the Glen one by one. There was nobody to blame for it I don't think. There was no work in the Glen for the people, and they had to go to the low country.

I married that year there was a failure of the potatoes (1846). I would be about 26 when I married. My wife's name was Margaret Sinclair, daughter of the late Angus Sinclair. He was a drover and lived at Stronefian. She was three years with the Buchanans, Stronefian, and after that she came to Ormidale as a dairy maid, and when she left Ormidale she went to the Campbells, Glendaruel. I was married at Ardachuple by Mr. Russell the Free Church Minister, who was on his way from Loch Striven to get married himself.

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I was working in Rothesay in the saw pits for four years before that. They sent me down to Ayr also. I was there three months and afterwards to Castle Toward, cutting wood, but the work was too heavy for me, and very nearly killed me.

There was a splendid crop of potatoes the year the disease came, but the pits tumbled in with rot after they were "howked". Any of the

potatoes that stood, they were sending away to Rothesay where they put up a big factory to make stiffening starch. We stopped at Stronefian with my mother, and we were at Stronefian when my two daughters were born -- Margaret McEwen who died of galloping consumption at fifteen, and Annie who married Alex. Smith.

The year that Charles McIntyre came to Achnagarren farm, when James Henderson left, they wanted a field to be drained, and one John Leech wrote the bargain, and I went with him to help finish the work. It was the late Colonel (Colonel Robert Campbell, of Ormidale) that was paying us. We got our pay for what we did and he would be coming every second day to see if we did right. Good pay it was, 6d. for six yards.

Donald Smith who was working the saw mill went away and the late Colonel put me in his place, and I worked the saw mill for fifty years in Ormidale, and then Duncan MacLachlan took my place for I was old and could not see to sharp the saws and so had to stop it.

We lived at Lochhead for nineteen years, and then at Waulk Mill. I must tell you how I worked one day for old Ormidale (John Campbell of Ormidale, father of Colonel Robert Campbell). He died 1842 aged 84 years. That's four lairds I have worked for.

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