



CLAN EWEN SOCIETY

Bulletin

No. 12 NOVEMBER 1984

TO ALL CLAN MEMBERS

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

On Wednesday, 15th August, 1984 at 4 p.m. precisely, your Chairman and Charles Ewen, the Treasurer, accompanied by their wives, took part in a short but somewhat moving ceremony. (See Page 115).

Simply, at that hour, Peter MacEwen placed a wreath on the Covenanters' Memorial in the Grassmarket in Edinburgh to commemorate one Samuel McEwen who was hanged for his Covenanting activities along with two others 300 years ago. The other two were named Andrew Clark and Thomas Harkness.

All three came from Leadhills, a small isolated village some 30 miles south of Lanark, high up in the moors known for centuries for its mining of lead, silver and gold. It is said that the gold for the Royal Regalia of Scotland – the Honours of Scotland – came from these hills.

Samuel and others had some little time previously been engaged in a highly successful attack on the King's men in an incident known as the Enterkin Rescue – from the bold rescue of some noted captured Covenanters in a small glen near Thornhill.

Unfortunately, Samuel and the other two were captured by the notorious Claverhouse some days later with the unhappy outcome detailed above. These were bitter years as King Charles II tried to dismantle Presbyterianism in Scotland and enforce the Episcopal system in its place. Only four years later, in 1688, William of Orange came to the throne and established Presbyterianism: Samuel and many others (it is said as many as 18,000) did not die in vain.

The ceremony of the wreath was requested by Mr. Thomas McCune Slick of Pennsylvania, one of whose ancestors was a brother of the heroic Samuel. He had wisely, perhaps, removed himself to Ulster, and from thence to America.

I pass on the story as an example of the passionate nature of the Scot in defence of what he has held dearer than life – a passion that lurks not very far below the surface even to this day. There must be many a story from all different angles – from the '15 and the '45 and the Clearances to mention only three – that tells the tale of how some of your ancestors came to brave the Atlantic and the uncertainties of a New Land and to seek a freedom that had eluded them at home. If you have such a story we would like to hear it.

We thank Tom Slick sincerely for sharing this sombre but glorious memory, and we pass on our good wishes to him and his family.

Reviresco. REV. PETER MacEWEN

YET ANOTHER NAME

If you have a name like McOwan it poses all kinds of problems because its derivation can mean several things and any Clan link would appear to be a tenuous one.

It has been linked to Colquhouns but that would be a bit of a disappointment, a greetin' faced lot who rushed to Stirling to display bloody shirts before King James VI in a bid to do down the MacGregors and all because the MacGregors were good at getting their retaliation in first. And a Colquhoun was one of General Custer's senior officers so it is no surprise they all got their come-panance from the Sioux.

In an advertisement in "The Highlander", published in the United States, I saw McOwan listed as a Glengarry name and this seemed much more desirable, if improbable, because at least the Glengarry MacDonalds or MacDonnells came out in the great Causes and had some kind of zest about them. *But inquiries showed it was not a Glengarry name, but despite a letter informing them of the fact the advertisement still carries it.*

I've seen it listed as a sept of the Campbells, but spelled as MacEwan, who were hereditary bards, I was told, to the Campbells of Argyll. I was intrigued to see in a recent Newsletter that that latter point was a matter of debate.

But that path seemed much more like the thing because I have always had a deep love of the Loch Fyneside area, and Argyll as a whole, and dote on the novels of Neil Munro, but a Campbell link can be an embarrassment if one finds oneself Jacobite in sympathies.

There was always a persistent tradition in our family on the male side that we had forebears from Loch Fyneside. (My mother's side is easy: Ross and Gunn).

When my brother, Iain, emigrated to Australia and my sister, Isobel, to Canada, they decided they would like the McOwan line researched so we did that through the Scottish Ancestry Research Council.

Fortunately, my mother was a meticulous woman and kept documentation and so we had grandfather's birth certificate.

So far the McOwan male line has been traced back to Comrie, in Perthshire, in 1789, but the name has been clearly spelled McEwan in the past and McOwan seems to have crept in by accident.

We are all familiar with the problem of careless spelling long ago and the fact that clerks often set down what they thought was the phonetic English for a Gaelic name. And people sometimes spelled their own name in different ways at different times.

But McEwan seems right and we are currently researching beyond the late 18th century.

Why should it all matter, this roots business, and by this time I should have asked readers' forgiveness for such a personally-oriented article? It is just that as one walks our hills and glens, and reads more and more of Scots history, and sees the ruins of townships and sheilings that one realises more and more what a remarkable race our Gaelic people were.

A kinship with the past, a 'feel' for roots, is a real and tangible thing. There has to be some reason why flat land leaves me flat and hill country raises

the spirits.

The McEwans and the Land of the Otter are worthy antecedents for any person. Before feudalism got in among clan life, and 'class' entered the land owning arena, chief and clansmen were one. It is easy to be overly-romantic about this and to push the example too far, but the fact is that in some centuries the chief held the land on behalf of the people and two-way loyalty was very real.

These are all admirable virtues: pride of race without denigrating others, love of one's native place, a martial history that has some swing and colour to it, kinship and fellowship.

The symbol of the tree and the new shoots springing from it are very real for people like me. It is like a door being opened in a wall and a track leading on to new ground.

A clan society today is an excellent thing: it can be an anachronism, unreal, a tartan never-never land. It can extol the virtues of the past and forget treachery and betrayal. It can degenerate into a ruse for asking British aristocracy to dinners. All these are real dangers.

But it can also be a gathering of like-minded people with a legitimate pride in the past, a wish to express it in a modern setting, a desire to know more of the past so that it can be accurately presented to modern ears, a forum where friendship and kinship can again be expressed. It is a bond that those outside the Clan do not have, although they may have others of their own.

It is, uniquely, our own. The McEwan Society is new to me, and from my own small corner as a new member one would like to see the old tree continually put out fresh shoots.

RENNIE McOWAN, 7 Williamfield Avenue, Stirling

SEANNACHIE'S SCRIBBLES

Your Seannachie has to report failure in his attempt to bring back a bottle of McEwan whisky from France last September. Despite spending a great deal of time which, some of his friends feel, could have been better spent in pursuing French culture, in systematic searches in Bars and Supermarkets along a fair stretch of the Mediterranean Coast, not a single bottle of McEwan was turned up. Still, there's always next year!

With the wonderful summer we have had in Scotland this year I must admit that my research into old records and history has suffered but with October bringing us back to normal weather I have got restarted and have already hit on what seems to be an interesting sidelight on the deportation ship, *the Henry of France*, which I mentioned in my last Scribbles. While I cannot be absolutely certain that the report I am going to quote refers to the *Henry of France*, dates and circumstances coincide and anyway the general description must fit most ships of its type.

One Scott of Pitlochrie who in 1685 has fallen on rather hard times and who was himself a "Vexed Presbyterian" petitions the privy Council for a consignment of "Tender conscienced men" who are part of "About two hundred westland peasants who had been taken up for various acts of recusancy" and locked up in Dunottar Castle. Pitlochrie who is contemplating settling in the

"Colony of East Jersey" and is in want of "Labourers and bondsmen for the culture of his lands" is "Gifted" a hundren of those recusants who had been condemned to banishment to which he adds a number of "Dyvours and broken men" besides the Covenantanters.

Fever breaks out before the ship is clear of British waters and a combination of illness, harsh treatment of people who were already undernourished from their spell of captivity, and of course conditions on board ship resulted in seventy of them including, it must be said Pitlochrie himself and his wife, dying. After fifteen weeks they arrive at their destination. There they find the people "not having the gospel among them, fairly indifferent to the fate of the Scottish Presbyterians", but a few miles inland where they find a Minister and a congregation they are received with great kindness.

Their troubles are not yet over as Pitlochrie's heir, in an act of "Singular litigation" sues them for their value as bond servants. A jury however throws this claim out on the grounds that since they were shipped against their will there could be no indenture.

The above is of course a summary of the report but might, I think, be of interest especially in view of the account elsewhere in this bulletin of our Chairman and Treasurer's attendance at the wreath laying ceremony earlier in the year in Edinburgh.

I am in touch with Vivian Eskie whose forebears come from the Perth area and whose daughter Gail is currently engaged in weaving herself a McEwan tartan. Most of us, I imagine, could find a weaver among our forebears and, who knows, it may be the blood coming out in a later generation. After all McEwen of Perth is not unknown in that connection.

Aberdeenshire Ewens are getting thicker on the ground as now in addition to Charles Ewen, our Treasurer, there is Judy Revoy of Canada, and Jennifer Sellars. We now have a request from Mrs. E. M. Birchall, 16 Lewis Street, Blockhouse Bay, Auckland 7, New Zealand, for any possible contacts. Mrs. Birchall's great Grandmother, Margaret Ewen, daughter of William Ewen and Helen Murray, who were married in the Parish of Cluny, with Margaret being born in the neighbouring parish of Tough in 1820. They emigrated to New Zealand in 1852. If any of this rings a bell with any of our members could they get in touch direct with Mrs. Birchall.

Miss Isobel McEwen Milne of Mayfield, 4 Hood Street, Wick, is looking for information on her great great Grandfather John McEwen, who moved from Inverness to Wick in 1829. I am still in the throes of getting details of Clan births etc., in the Perthshire area and have nothing on Inverness McEwens. Could any of our Inverness members help Miss Milne?

A recent member, John R. Coon of Illinois, brings yet another spelling into my ever growing list of spellings (although McQn still leads the list - in my opinion). John, unlike most of us, can get his family back to 1652 when John McCoone, after fighting against Cromwell is banished and arrives in Boston on the ship John and Sarah. The family name goes through the familiar change of spellings, McCune, Mckoun and (and this I find very interesting) MacCome and Macholme. Those are new to me in a Clan Ewen connection and while John thinks his original McCoone came from Aberdeenshire, I will be having a look at the Galloway Macs.

I am looking forward to a week in Edinburgh around the end of November/ beginning of December, when I will be having a go at the various queries I have

promised to check upon. Apart from individual families I hope this winter to get a bit farther on two main projects. First is an attempt to find a present-day family whom we can trace back to the original Ewens of Mid Argyll and I am beginning to wonder if perhaps I will find it in Perthshire. However this is speculation and while it amuses me I will not bore readers till I have something more concrete to report. Secondly is my attempt to trace the Ewing movement to the States via Ulster and here I am on better ground as it mainly involves reading and taking advice from people more versed in Scottish history than I will ever be.

But it is all an entrancing hobby and as I have said already, it is to me real history.

A. G. M. REPORT

The A.G.M. of the Clan Ewen Society was held this year at Irvine on Saturday, 6th of October. It was a beautiful day and a memorable A.G.M.

Members were welcomed first at No. 10 Glasgow Vennel, the home of the Ayrshire Writers and Artists' Society by the Convener of Cunninghame District Council. The Vennel has recently been saved from demolition and has undergone extensive rehabilitation and is of particular note as being the street where Burns lived and worked during his stay in Irvine. Members enjoyed drinks and a display of the Scottish Clans on Exhibition before moving to the Heckling Shop at the rear for the Business meeting. This building has only been opened to the public this year and has been rethatched and restored to its original state. It made an excellent setting for the A.G.M., where as usual the feeling was of a family gathering. Business was conducted efficiently and was followed by much friendly conversation and a delightful afternoon tea.

There was a short break thereafter and the company re-gathered later at Wellwood, the Irvine Burns Club. Again a gracious welcome was extended and members were shown several rooms in the house including the beautiful painted Burns room. Dinner was served upstairs in the lovely candlelit dining room and here again the town of Irvine excelled itself. The setting and food were superb and the wine flowed. A ceilidh had been arranged for later and the company was entertained by some first class artistes.

We are greatly indebted to Hugh and Mae McEwan in the organisation of the A.G.M. They both made a real effort to ensure that this day was a memorable one. We, as a Society, could not have achieved this as Hugh and Mae are both personally involved in and with Cunninghame District Council and were therefore dealing with personalities rather than a district council. We thank Hugh and Mae sincerely. It was unfortunate that this year we did not have any visitors from overseas as I am sure they would have been impressed with the history and restoration at Glasgow Vennel and seeing round Wellwood.

Special thanks also go to Cunninghame District Council for their welcome and generosity. The Royal Burgh of Irvine did us proud and the Clan Ewen will hope, some day, to return to this delightful town.

E. McEWAN WILLIAMSON,

Secretary

THE RIVER THAMES and THE VILLAGE "EWEN"



A few stones lie in a little hollow under an old ash tree in a field about three miles south-west of Cirencester, in the south-west of England. There seems to be nothing remarkable about this spot, but quite a number of people make their way across the field to reach it. The inscription on a large block of stone explains the reason for their journey.

‘THE CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER THAMES 1857–1974
THIS STONE WAS PLACED HERE TO MARK THE SOURCE
OF THE RIVER THAMES.’

Many of the people who go to this spot, which is called Thames Head, are surprised and also somewhat disappointed to find no water there, except after heavy rainfall. During the summer months there can be not even the slightest trickle that could be regarded as the beginning of England's greatest river. Sometimes – but very rarely – the rain is so heavy that there is quite a flood and then the Thames actually becomes navigable all the way to its source.

The Thames is “the King of Island Rivers”. If deficient in the grander features of landscape, it is rich in pictorial beauty; its associations are closely linked with heroic men and glorious achievements; it wanders through fertile meadows and beside pleasant banks, gathering strength from a thousand tributaries. On either side are remains of ancient grandeur, homely villages, palatial dwellings and populous cities and towns; boats and barges, and the sea-craft of a hundred nations, indicate and enhance its wealth. Its history is that of England; the Britons, the Romans, the Saxons, the Danes and the Normans in turn made it their “seat of war”, or settling upon its banks, sought the repose of peace and the blessing of agriculture and commerce.

THE
WILD DUCK INN
(A.D. 1563)



EWEN

nr. Cirencester, Glos.

The meadow at its source is known as "Yeoring Field" and is part of the parish of Ewelme of which the name presents the corrupted form. Nearby is the lovely unspoilt village of "Ewen" with its "Wild Duck Inn", an ideal centre to enjoy the pleasures of the South Cotswolds. The main structure of the Inn dates back to 1563.

Local people were vague about how their village had got its name. One employee of the Inn thought it was named after a Scotsman called "MacEwen". In early times there was a chapel in the village but it appears to have been demolished when the church at Kemble was built. The tradition exists that the materials from the chapel contributed to form the south aisle which is still called "the Ewen Aisle".

In Old English "aewielm" means "spring" or "source" and "Akermann in Archaeologia xxxii, 116" writes that the village "Ewen" derives its name from one of the springs which rises in the neighbourhood and that this must be the one known as "Thames Head", since the field in which it is situated is called "Yeoring Field".

CHARLES and MARTHA EWING

Touring around the British countryside brings many surprises to Martha and Charlie Ewen. Last year it was 'Castle Ewen' in Skye and now this year at the other end of the country, the village of 'Ewen'. They look forward, in anticipation, to what next year may reveal.

Dr. McEwan and his family live
in a five-storey house with parents
dating back to the 13th century.

General Practitioner

GLASGOW'S MILES BETTER

Over the last year or so the above slogan has been used to head an international publicity campaign regarding the image of Scotland's largest city and to advertise its benefits and attractions to potential employers and tourists alike.

After two or three decades of demolition and rebuilding, a fine new motorway runs through the heart of the city crossing the river on a bridge with five lines in each direction. The transport convenience for cross-city journeys is the envy of most European cities, and this is matched by other recent developments in both business and leisure activities in the city.

To the internationally known reputation for the finest parks of any British town or city, and the Kelvingrove Art Gallery (ranked second to the Tower of London for annual visitors), and many other places of interest like Provand's Lordship, the People's Palace, Hagg's Castle and the fine Transport Museum, there was added in the last year the Burrell Collection gallery in Pollok Country Park (which also contains the fine Pollok House — of beautiful Adam design). Remarkably with its 8000 items valued at £40 million upwards, the Collection may be viewed FREE and is a must for any visitor to Scotland from now on.

Truly Glasgow is miles better than it used to be — and well worth a visit as a base for a few days. The West Coast of Scotland is amongst the most scenic in the world, and sailing either on the Clyde, Loch Lomond or to the Isles is only a short distance from the city — and if it's raining there's always some of the best shops in Scotland and plenty of good hotels too.

For 1985 Glasgow is to play hosts to several events of note. Many of the events of the International Gathering Scotland are to be held there, and the key week is May 25th to June 1st. (During the week June 1st to June 8th the Gathering activities mainly move to Edinburgh). During the Glasgow week a combined Clan Exhibition is to be held in the McLellan Galleries in Sauchiehall Street, and our

Society expect to be represented.

A few weeks earlier, March 25th — 31st, the World Ice Curling Championships are to be held in the main arena of the city's Kelvin Hall — with a special ice-rink being laid down for the occasion.

Later in the year the brand new International Conference Centre is due to open on the north riverside near Finnieston in November with a Motor Show. And in the future, recently announced for 1988 is an International Garden Festival in the former Princes Dock area on the south side of the river. Over the next 3½ years over 100 acres are to be laid out for this at a cost of many millions of pounds.

The conclusion must be — *Come to Glasgow and come soon* — to the International Gathering 1985 if you can.

For information about the city, contact — The Information Office, Glasgow District Council, St. Vincent Place, Glasgow G1.



CLAN EWEN SOCIETY

ACCOUNTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 5th OCTOBER, 1984

<i>INCOME</i>	£
Subscriptions received since 8/10/83 (95)	272.98
Sale of Clan Equipment	22.00
Donations	98.25
Interest on Deposit Account	10.05
Interest on Clan Centre Account	1.52
	<u>404.80</u>

<i>EXPENDITURE</i>	£
Printing of Two Bulletins	166.00
Postage	77.56
Room Hire for Meetings	38.95
Rent of Site for Booth at Glasgow Highland Games	23.00
Sundries	36.41
Surplus for Year	62.88
	<u>404.80</u>

<i>TRADING ACCOUNT</i>	£		£
Opening Stock	79.01	Sales	22.00
Profit	<u>9.03</u>	Closing Stock	<u>66.04</u>
	<u>88.04</u>		<u>88.04</u>

<i>ASSETS</i>	£
Closing Stock	66.04
Deposit Account	282.64
Clan Centre Account	85.33
Current Account	74.98
Cash on Hand	<u>8.08</u>
	<u>517.07</u>

SIGNED CHARLES EWEN, Treasurer

AUDITOR'S REPORT

I have today examined the Books and Accounts of the Clan Ewen Society and have found all in order and expenditure sufficiently vouched for.

SIGNED IAN McEWAN, Auditor 1st October 1984

MEMBERSHIP

We now have a membership of 142, but, unfortunately, there are a number (30) of these members who have not paid their subscriptions for some considerable time. Would these members, if they still wish to continue their membership, please forward their subscription to the Secretary at their earliest convenience.

OFFICE-BEARERS OF CLAN EWEN SOCIETY

Chairman: Rev. Peter J. McEwen, Lindsaylands Cottage
Biggar. TEL: Biggar 20471

Vice-Chairman: Lt. Col. Alan Ewing, Balgowan, Garngaber
Avenue, Lenzie. TEL: 041 - 221 - 6922

Secretary: Miss E. Williamson, Belcairn Cottage, Cove
by Helensburgh. TEL: 043 - 684 - 2352

Treasurer: Mr. C. Ewen, 3 Havelock Park, Hairmyres
East Kilbride. TEL: East Kilbride 36375

Genealogist: Mr. C. McEwan, Flat 1A Wallace House,
Berryhill Road, Ravenswood, Seafar, Cum-
bernauld G67 1LU. TEL: 023 - 67 33789

Bulletin Editor: Mrs. E. McEwen, 1 Blantyre Place, Coat-
bridge. TEL: Coatbridge 22638

North America Correspondent: William H. MacEwen, P.O. Box 3, St. Peters,
Nova Scotia BOE 3B0, Canada

Cheques should be made payable to CLAN EWEN SOCIETY, Scotland U.K.
crossed and forwarded to:

Miss E. Williamson, Belcairn Cottage, COVE, By Helensburgh, G84 0NX

CLAN EWEN SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

SESSION 1984/85

Member/s Name:

Address

.....
.....
.....

SUBSCRIPTION : SINGLE — £3.00 : FAMILY — £5.00

Additional Contributions (*Optional*): To operating Acc.

To Clan Centre Acc.

NO RECEIPT WILL BE SENT UNLESS REQUESTED