

# THE SCOTS CANADIAN

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Fall 2010

## Drama, music and history mark Foundation's key activities over past year

REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

*Dear fellow members,*

I do hope you have had a pleasant summer and are suitably refreshed and ready for the fall and winter seasons ahead. As I write this on the idyllic shores of Mary Lake in Muskoka, I'm sure I can almost hear the leaves turning colour!

Looking back at our activities since the last newsletter, I realize just how much we have crammed into the past year and would like to thank everyone involved for their efforts in making each and every event a success.

Once again, our gala event was the Scottish Studies Society's Tartan Day/Scot of the Year Award in April and we were delighted to have Richard Wernham named Scot of the Year 2010.

Richard is a power to be reckoned with. He has more than twenty years' experience in the global wealth management industry and was the founder and Chief Executive of Global Strategy Financial, one of Canada's largest independent mutual fund companies.

Currently the Chairman of the Soutterham Group, he was formerly a lawyer with Torys, specializing in securities and corporate law. Richard was also a Special Lecturer in Law, Trinity College at the University of Toronto from 1977-1994 and remains active in the academic community holding appointments as Chair of the Board of Greenwood College School, as a Trustee and member of the Foundation's Joint Foundation/School Strategic Planning Committee of Lakefield College School, and as a Chair of the Investment Committee for Upper Canada College.

Richard has been a significant financial supporter of the academic community, and with his wife, Julia, funded the establishment of the Richard Wernham and Julia West Centre for Learning at Upper Canada College. Richard also co-founded Greenwood College School, a co-educational independent day school in Toronto. The Robert L. Payton Award 2010 was presented

to Richard by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. He is also a Governor of the Royal Ontario Museum.

Going back to our activities last autumn, not only were we delighted to help sponsor the International Festival of Authors event at Harbourfront but we also commissioned a musical production based on the Music of Lady Nairne with an introductory launch in Toronto. We now have the script, music and talent all set to take this show on the road if there is sufficient interest.

2010 got off to a good start thanks to another excellent Burns Night at Toronto's Granite Club organized by Gordon Hepburn and his team and in February we sponsored the opening of the East Side Players production of "Mary Stuart" which was a great success due to the efforts of Gordon Paterson who organized that event.

Also, thanks to an initial donation of \$65,000 from the Scottish Studies Foundation, a new course in Canada's immigration literature and history is being created at the University of Guelph's Humber Campus.

"This new course will enable students to expand their knowledge of Canadian identity and heritage," said Joanne Shoveller, University of Guelph's VP of Alumni Affairs and Development praising the Foundation for its support, which has allowed the university to advance learning, teaching, and research in areas such as community and culture.

I am personally very proud of this and would like to thank everyone involved for making this project a reality. I personally believe that Canada is a one huge multicultural social experiment with the potential to be a role model for the rest of the world. For that reason we have to reach out



*Richard Wernham Scot of the Year 2010 and his Mom*

to the culture, literature and history of all groups who strive to build this nation and work to fulfill the promise and dreams of our early pioneers. In a small, but very important way, I hope that the new course will help further this goal.

In April, our Annual Spring Colloquium, held at the University of Toronto's Knox College, focused on Ulster Scots and their legacy, with the keynote address *Ulster Scots: their Heraldic Connections* given by Dr. James Floyd, of Heriot-Watt University and the Heraldry Society of Scotland. From the University of Guelph, talks were also given by Dr. John Sherry: *Making Ulster Scottish: seventeenth century Scottish settlement in Ulster and its consequences*; Dr. Edmund Rogers Good Stock: *Wilfred Campbell on the Ulster Scotsmen* and Mr. Daniel Macleod: *The Scottish Catholic Church in the Reformation Period*.

In June, the Universities of Toronto and Guelph hosted the Research Institute of Irish and Scottish Studies 2010 Diaspora Conference: *Irish and Scottish Encounters with Indigenous Peoples*.

At the time of British colonial expansion, the Scots and Irish existed in an ambivalent, tense and sometimes hostile relationship to England but in what ways did their own experiences of colonialism affect their attitudes towards indigenous peoples? To what extent were they agents or critics of imperialism and how were these interactions reflected in literature, music and the arts? How did the Irish, Scots and indigenous peoples shape their political, social, religious, and economic relations with one

another? And how were Scots, Irish and indigenous peoples' understandings of the world transformed as a result of these encounters?

These were some of the issues addressed in this international conference jointly organized by the Celtic Studies Programme, St. Michael's College, University of Toronto; the Scottish Studies Programme, Guelph University; and the University of Aberdeen's Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies.

From Canada, speakers were Donald Harman Akenson from Queen's University and Patricia McCormack from the University of Alberta; from the US, Colin Calloway, Dartmouth College and Kevin Kenny, Boston College. Also speaking were Ann McGrath from the Australian National University and Brad Patterson from New Zealand's Victoria University and Irish Times journalist Fintan O'Toole.

In September, we celebrated our 19th Annual Tall Ship Cruise aboard Canada's largest sailing ship, the *Empire Sandy*. We had an impressive attendance with people of all ages participating and our morning cruise featured a 49th wedding anniversary celebration with the "bride and groom" being piped on board. Thanks again to our Vice President, Maggie McEwan, for championing this event.

This year's Fall Colloquium featured the Annual Jill McKenzie Memorial Lecture entitled *Robert Burns in Transatlantic Culture: The 1859 Centenary*, which was given by Dr. Leith Davis, Director of the Scottish Studies Centre at Simon Fraser University. Dr. Lucille Campey, author of the newly-released *Planters, Paupers, and Pioneers: English Settlers in Atlantic Canada* presented *Push, Pull and Opportunity: Emigration from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland to Canada* and the event also featured talks by Dr. Barbara Murison, Dr. Kris Gies and the 2009 Winner of the Jane Grier Graduate Scholarship, Mr. James Jensen. Also included was the Graduate Awards and Report for Scottish Studies at Guelph as well as the launch of the latest issue of the *International Review of Scottish Studies*.

On a more personal note, however, it was with mixed feelings that my term as President ended at the AGM last April. I never failed to consider it a great honour for me to be elected to the position of President and to work with such a talented group of volunteers, university faculty and members. It was back in June of 2001 when I was first elected, just over nine years ago, but now the time has come to hand over the reins to other willing hands and I am pleased that our treasurer David Campbell volunteered and was successfully elected to the position. I

will, however, continue to work for the Foundation as newsletter and website editor and in doing so, I thought you might be interested in the following article which we originally published in 1998 as a way of introducing David to you.

So in closing I thank each and every one of you for the contribution you have made to our cause. All of the events we have been involved with over the last year would not have been possible without your support. And from all of us on the Board please accept our best wishes to you and your family and friends.

Sincerely,

*David Hunter*

*At the Society's Tartan Day Dinner on April 21, 1998 David Campbell presented a cheque to the Scottish Studies Foundation in excess of \$13,000, a sum bequeathed in memory of his late father Dr. Ronald Campbell. In this excerpt from his speech he provides some insight into this generous and talented man.*

Who was my father? Well, he was born in Glasgow in 1919 and educated at the University of Glasgow, graduating with degrees in science and medicine, as well as a diploma in surgery.

He served in Royal Army Medical Corps 1946-1952 in Germany, North Africa and England and in 1950 married Dr. Margaret Kennedy. They had three children -- Colin, David and Kim. The family emigrated from Glasgow to Newfoundland in 1954 where my father went to work as an outpost doctor. He moved to Shelburne, Nova Scotia in 1956 and worked as a GP and surgeon.

In 1964 he left his practice to work in the federal government in Ottawa, going through several positions until his last: Director of Medical Division in the Bureau of Medical Devices.

But what of the man behind the dry recitation of facts? A man who was the editor of the *Glasgow University Magazine*, a writer of poetry largely in the French style. A man who always felt left out at not having been able to serve in the world war. A lover of boats who built painstakingly accurate model boats as well as life size sailing boats, and loved the serenity that settles upon a sail on a calm night. An avid sketcher, who captured his surroundings in pencil and watercolour, and dabbled in other media later in life.

A man who took up embroidery on leaving surgery, recognizing that he needed something fine to do with his hands as a replacement. An elder of the church and

sometime lay preacher, a deeply spiritual man in the Presbyterian faith. A keen follower of Scottish history and literature, who made the lore and the lilt of the highlands part of our nuclear family culture. An excellent cook, who made a delicious Scotch broth and knew the secrets of Yorkshire pudding and crackling on a pork roast.

He taught us to recognize the beauty in simple things done well. He taught us about the obligations that come with talents. He never made anyone feel small for not knowing something that he did. He would talk comfortably to anyone, and had a great gift for finding common ground with people. He had tremendous respect for the skilled tradesman and the product of his craft.

He had a wry, observer's sense of humour, and an appreciation for what he called the Newfoundlander joke, which celebrates the self-reliance and independence of the people of my native province, rather than the Newfie joke, which could be told about any group held in low opinion. He showed us pride -- not boastful pride, but confident pride -- in our Scottish heritage, and taught us the value of family in any culture.

Although my father and mother's marriage ended in 1968 my Dad was blessed with a second chance for happiness with my stepmother, Mary Louise. My Dad's marriage with Mary Louise Funke in 1974 was a rare pairing of two soul-mates. Malou, who was of German background, was a professor of Art History at Carleton University. Although she was German in heritage she wholeheartedly embraced the Scottish culture and said in later years that the latter part of her life was lived proudly as a Campbell. They complemented each other marvelously well, and were very happy together from 1974 until his death in 1982.

When my stepmother died last summer she left instructions in her will for me to give a percentage of her estate to a Canadian charitable organization in memory of my father.

After consulting with my brother and sister I could think of no more appropriate cause to commemorate my father's life than the Scottish Studies Foundation. The Foundation has been doing marvelous work in support of the Scottish Studies Program at the University of Guelph, but always needs more funding, and I encourage you all to continue your active support of this worthy enterprise. I am delighted in my capacity as executor for the estate of Mary Louise Campbell to present this cheque to the Foundation, with congratulations on their achievements to date and best wishes for continued success in the future. ■

# The Black Watch Mutiny of 1743

Colin Martin

At six o'clock on Monday morning, 18th July, 1743, on the Tower Parade, three Highland soldiers were led out to face a firing squad. They were sentenced mutineers of the 42nd Regiment of Foot - the Black Watch.

The Black Watch was formed in 1725 as a territorial militia composed of six independent companies of Highland volunteers. Their task was quite plainly stated - to promote the authority of the government in the Highlands, and to guard against Jacobite insurrection. The Regiment drew its recruits from the sons of Highland gentlemen; hence the high quality and spirit of its soldiers was in direct contrast to that of the brutally treated regular infantry battalions.

In November 1739, the six companies were raised to ten and regimented by Royal Warrant under John, Earl of Crawford. There seemed no reason, however, to suppose that this change would affect in terms of service, and recruiting went on as before. In 1741, Hugh, 12th Lord Sempill, became the Regiment's Colonel.

As its strength increased the Black Watch became an important factor in the government's control of the Highlands. Detachments watched the Highland passes, and a reserve stood at readiness to deal with any Jacobite troubles which might flare up. Vigorous operations were directed against cattle raiding and other forms of Highland lawlessness.

In these circumstances, it seems incredible that the Black Watch should even have been considered for service elsewhere. But the Hanoverian government was more interested in supporting the House of Austria against the Elector of Bavaria and the King of France than in bothering with what it considered to be the domestic affairs of the Highlands. The War Office secretly decided, in July 1742, to send the Black Watch to Flanders.

The rumour soon leaked. It disturbed that far-sighted and moderate statesman, Duncan Forbes of Culloden, Lord President of the Court of Session, to whom Cumberland once referred as "that old woman who talked to me about humanity".

In a letter to General Clayton, commander of the forces in North Britain, Forbes pointed out in the strongest terms the dangers which an unguarded Scotland would present, particularly if a Jacobite rising with French support were to flare. His advice, as always,

was ignored. By March 1743, the Black Watch was on its way south.

The War Office had given no direct orders for overseas posting, and the authorities did their best to trick the Highlanders into thinking that the march south was for no other purpose than to allow the King to review them.

When the soldiers expressed surprise that they were to march all the way to London merely to take part in a review, it was explained that the King, who had never before seen a Highland regiment, wished to honour them personally.

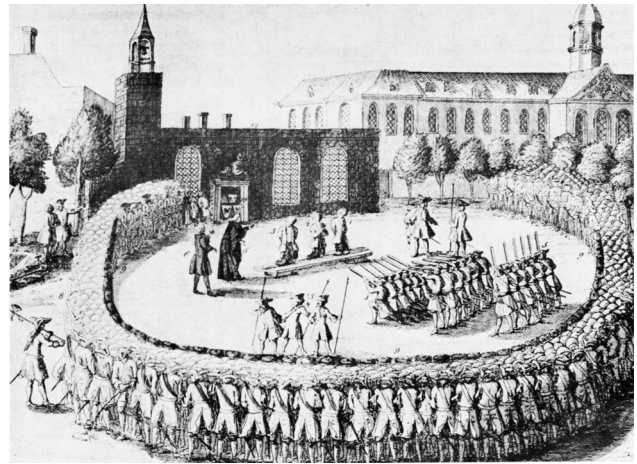
On the way to London the Regiment met recruiting parties from other regiments - regiments which had been practically wiped out by service in the West Indies. The Highlanders began to suspect that they were destined for that frightful station, where regiments had lost up to 90% of their number from disease. The Black Watch can hardly be blamed for becoming desperate.

When the Regiment paraded on Finchley Common, its men were unaware that transports were waiting at Gravesend to carry them to Flanders after the review.

Neither the King nor the Prince of Wales, suffering no doubt from understandable pangs of conscience, attended the review. Their absence was bitterly resented by the Highlanders. Old General Wade took the parade, and many spectators commented on the discipline and bearing of the Highland troops. What they could not see was the buttoned-up fury of the Regiment. This fury increased beyond all bounds when the Highlanders officially learnt, after the review, that they were bound for overseas service.

When a soldier is treated unfairly he is likely to entertain mutinous thoughts, but in view of the enormity of the crime of mutiny he is unlikely to put them into effect. But when the most gross unfairness is perpetrated upon an entire regiment individual resentment finds itself supported and fostered on all sides and quickly crystallizes into a firm resolve to act. Thus it was with the Black Watch in 1743. A secret plan passed through the ranks calling on them to meet on Finchley Common at midnight on Tuesday, 17th May.

As it happened only 112 Highlanders made the clandestine rendezvous. But they were 112 angry and determined men, and nearly all of them carried their muskets.



*The execution of Corporals Samuel and Malcolm MacPherson and Private Farquhar Shaw of the Black Watch on the Tower Parade on July 18, 1743*

Armed mutiny is the most serious crime a soldier can commit.

When news of the mutiny broke, two Black Watch officers went out and bravely tried to win back the men before the affair went further. But the two officers were driven off at bayonet point, while a sergeant who accompanied them was struck by one of the mutineers, Private Farquhar Shaw.

It is said that Samuel Macpherson, one of the men later shot, was the leader of the mutiny. This fact was never proved, since at the court-martial the Highlanders, to whom loyalty to their comrades was as natural as breathing, denied that they had any leader.

Marching by night, hiding by day, the Highlanders moved through the Home Counties with the stealth and speed they had learned in their home glens. By the time the mutineers reached Bedfordshire, the pursuit was on. Brigadier-General Blakeney was charged with the capture of the Highlanders, and he was given several troops of dragoons. The whole affair had been hushed up as far as possible, and Lord Sempill was instructed by Wade to keep his remaining men drawn out under arms to prevent further desertions.

Sempill was a sick man, and his remaining companies had adopted a threatening attitude and were themselves on the brink of mutiny. He had to call on the Secretary at War to request assistance to keep his regiment under discipline. Even so, a second outbreak of mutiny occurred.

Again Finchley Common was the rallying place chosen by the mutineers; this time they were some forty strong. They too marched north, but just outside Barnet they were overtaken by three of their officers. All except seven were persuaded to return at once. The seven later rejoined the regiment, but four of them were court-martialed.

In the meantime the original mutineers had been pinned down by Blakeney's dragoons at Lady Wood, near Oundle in

Northamptonshire. On the evening of 19th May a gamekeeper had spotted the Highlanders dug into a strong position within the wood, and word had been hurried to Blakeney. The General dispatched Captain Ball of Wade's Regiment with instructions to demand the immediate unconditional surrender of the mutineers.

Ball cautiously approached the Highlanders' position and called on its holders to give themselves up and surrender their arms. They refused; they would come out of the wood only if they were to continue bearing arms, and to receive a free pardon from the General. Ball continued his plea.

Four of the ringleaders, including Corporal Samuel Macpherson, presented their muskets at the captain, and swore that, if he continued to talk or treat with any more of their company, they would shoot him. They would, they said, be cut to pieces before they would capitulate on conditions other than those they had demanded.

Ball granted the mutineers an hour to reconsider their decision, and asked for two of the Highlanders to escort him out of the wood. When he was alone with the escort, Ball managed to convince one of them to come with him, and the other to go back and persuade his comrades to come out. The man soon returned with thirteen Highlanders, and half an hour later a further seventeen gave themselves up. Captain Ball blew the priming charge from each man's firelock, and marched the thirty mutineers to the General.

When Ball returned to Lady Wood the remaining Highlanders capitulated. The captain and his men were then ordered to escort the mutineers to the Tower of London. There, in case of further trouble, each man of the garrison was issued with ten extra rounds of ammunition.

There was none. The gesture had been made; the gallant attempt to march back to Scotland had failed after seventy miles. Now came the reckoning.

Before the Highlanders had been captured - before even the court-martial warrant had been signed - the Lords Justice, with the full concurrence of the King, had decided that "some of the most guilty" should be shot.

The court-martial at the Tower began on Wednesday, 8th June, and lasted a week. With its thirteen bewigged and red-coated field officers, it must have been a terrifying court to face on capital charges. Major-General John Folliott, colonel of the First Foot Guards was president. The proceedings were complicated by the fact that few of the Highlanders spoke any English and a Gaelic interpreter had to be employed.

The first to be tried was Private William Gordon. He presented a petition on behalf of them all. It made complaint about the fact that no allowance had been given them on the Highland weapons most of them carried;

that they were not paid sufficiently for the upkeep of their brogues, and that they ought to have been issued with two shirts per year instead of one. They pled guilty to the charge of mutiny but claimed that "we were levied only to guard the Highlands and not to be employ'd elsewhere".

Their officers gave the men exceptionally good character references - it will be remembered that the soldiers had been drawn from good backgrounds and that most of them were, within the eighteenth century meaning of the term, gentlemen. In spite of this, and of the fact that several of the men had not been properly enlisted, all except one were pronounced guilty and sentenced to death. The exception had deserted three days before the review, and was therefore not guilty of mutiny. He received the "trifling" sentence of 1000 lashes.

It seemed unlikely that the sentences would be carried out - if for no other reason because so many trained men could not be heedlessly wasted. Pardons were granted to most of the Highlanders, on condition that they joined regiments in the dreaded West Indies, and never again served in the Black Watch (which by this time was distinguishing itself in Flanders).

But the Secretary at War had decided that an example must be made. Three men were chosen. Samuel Macpherson, the corporal who was suspected of having led the mutiny, was one. His brother Malcolm, the only other N.C.O. implicated, was also to die. Finally, Farquhar Shaw, the private who had struck the sergeant on Finchley Common, was selected to pay the supreme penalty.

All three were unmarried. Samuel Macpherson was a linguist who had studied law; Malcolm had helped to manage his father's estate in Laggan, and Shaw had joined the regiment when his droving business had failed. The men died bravely on Tower Parade, in the presence of the garrison and their comrades. Two of them required the "coup de grace" - a macabre but interesting comment on eighteenth century musketry standards.

In 1910 H.D. MacWilliam, the historian of the mutiny wrote: "On George II and his government must rest the responsibility for the mutiny, and the stigma for all time of the treacherous and tyrannical treatment accorded to the brave and loyal men of the Black Watch - men of whom it may be truly said, without any disparagement of the men of the Highland regiments of today, "We ne'er shall see their like again!."

And it is interesting to reflect that had the Black Watch been in Scotland in 1745, the course of the '45 and the subsequent tragic history of the Highlands might have been very different. ■

## The Scottish Navy

W. Pratt Paul

The saga of "Ye Mariners of England" glows on history's pages, but many of their greatest achievements were shared - even before the Union - with Scottish sea dogs. Scottish ballads, poems and folklore laud the prowess of Sir Andrew Wood of Largo, the Bartons - John and his three sons, Robert, Andrew and John - and Scotland too had her sailor kings.

Scotland was slow to appreciate the importance of sea power and this had a retarding effect on her development and laid the country open to invading Norsemen and pirates.

After the English defeat at Bannockburn, however, sufficient money for the creation of a permanent navy was forthcoming and towards the close of his reign Bruce devoted considerable attention to shipbuilding at Cardross. But after his death Scotland's independence was again challenged.

When Edward Baliol invaded in 1332 and captured Perth a squadron facilitated this by operating in the Forth and Tay. The Scottish Government assembled ten ships by hiring Flemish captains at Berwick-on-Tweed but the attempt to drive off the enemy ended in failure, all the ships being burned.

In 1296, in the reign of John Baliol - "Toom Tabard" - the result had been similar. The inhabitants of Berwick were massacred by the English as a reprisal for the burning of their ships.

When the "Auld Alliance" was invoked and French naval help secured the tide of war usually favoured the Scots. In 1338 Perth was re-captured from the "Southrons" with the assistance of a French squadron and a band of men-at-arms from Calais.

In 1377 a privateer fleet - French, Flemish and Scottish - attacked and plundered Scarborough, but English retaliation forced the Scottish Government to rig out two ships for protective duties. The maintenance of large armies to repel invasion left little revenue for the upkeep of fighting ships and the Scottish Navy entered a period of decline.

James I, when a prince, was captured by the English in 1405 - in time of peace - while bound for France. This incident may have had much to do with his establishment later of a shipbuilding yard at Leith.

With the advent of artillery in Scotland in the reign of James II the construction of ships was revolutionized. The old trireme and Viking types gave way to men o'war and merchant vessels with thicker hulls to resist shot and with high forecastles to mount cannon.

Two of Scotland's greatest victories over the English took place in a period of peace.

Five English ships sailed north in 1489 and began to plunder shipping in the Forth. James IV sent Sir Andrew Wood, Scotland's greatest naval commander, against the enemy with two vessels. After a severe engagement Sir Andrew brought the five raiders captive into Leith. Henry VII, on hearing of this, dispatched Stephen Bull to the Forth with three large ships with orders to bring Sir Andrew to London, dead or alive. The Flower and Yellow Carvel, Sir Andrew's men o'war, were duly sighted and battle was joined.

Locked in deadly combat they drifted near the Bell Rock, off Arbroath, where the Scots, by a supreme effort, compelled the English to surrender. Sir Andrew's two ships escorted the three battered English vessels into Dundee. In his struggle with the rebellious nobles in 1488 James III received the assistance of the Flower and Yellow Carvel. Fleeing from Sauchieburn he was making for these ships, then lying in the Forth, when he was murdered.

James III was the first king since Bruce to appreciate sea power and he built up an efficient fleet. But vessels constructed and those purchased had to serve in a dual role - merchantmen in peace and fighting ships in war. Thus the sturdy merchant skippers and seamen of Leith, the Lothians and Fife for many years were the country's bulwark against Scandinavian, French, Flemish, Spanish and English warships, privateers and pirates. During the reigns of James III and James IV, Scotland's maritime power increased. England was then pre-occupied and later torn by the Wars of the Roses. James IV ordered the construction of ships at Leith and elsewhere and several fighting ships built on the Continent were bought.

About 1450 Bishop James Kennedy of St. Andrews designed the St. Salvator. This large vessel could be adapted for fighting or for commerce and cost in the region of £10,000 - a deal of money in these days.

It is thought likely that the St. Salvator was built on the Continent. Also known as the "Bishop's Barge", the St. Salvator was employed by Royal personages but while on a voyage to Flanders in 1472, she was wrecked off Bamborough, on the Northumberland coast, with heavy loss of life.

Robert Lindsay of Pitscottie writes in his *Historie and Chronicles of Scotland* of "ane varie monstrous great schip" - the Michael, built at Newhaven, Midlothian, by an individual named Jacques Terrell.

Robert Lindsay states: "The Scottish king bigged a great ship called the Great Michael, which was the greatest ship and of most strength that ever sailed in England or France; for this ship was of so great stature and took so much timber, that, except for Falkland, she wasted all the woods in Fife,

bye all the timber that was gotten out of Norway; she was so strong and of so great length and breadth all wrights of Scotland, yes and many other strangers were at her device, by the king's commandment, who wrought very busily in her; but it was a year and day ere she was complete. To wit, she was twelve score feet in length, and thirty-six foot within the sides; she was ten feet thick in the wall, outted jests of oak in her wall, and boards on every side, so stark and so thick that no cannon could go through her.

"This great ship cumbered Scotland to get her to the sea. From that time she was afloat, and her masts and sails complete, she was counted to the king to be £30,000 if expenses, with tows and anchors effeiring thereto - by her artillery, which was very great and costly to the king. She bare many cannons, six on every side, with three great bassils (firing a 200 lb. shot), two behind in her deck, and one before, with three hundred shot of small artillery - that is to say, myand, and battert-falcon, and quarter-falcon, slings, pestilent serpentens, and double dogs, with hagtor and culvering, cors-bows and hand-bows; she had three hundred mariners to sail her; she had six score gunners to use her artillery; and had one thousand men of warre, bye her captains, skippers and quartermasters. When this ship passed the sea and was lying in the road of Leith, the king gart shoot a cannon at her to essay if she was wight; but I heard say it deared her nocht, and did little skaith."

The Great Michael, which took five years to complete, was launched in October, 1511, in the King's presence. Shipwrights from France, gunners from the Low Countries, ironworkers from Spain and tinsmiths from Cornwall mingled with Scottish craftsmen and it must have been babel on the banks of the Forth when work commenced in 1507.

Denmark provided her copper sheathing and standing rigging and her anchors came from Cadiz. Her 10 ft. thick sides denuded the woods of Fife and there was oak from Inverness-shire, France and Norway. For her main masthead flag it required twenty-two ells of fine cloth to fashion the St. Andrew's Cross. In the ship's company were three priests, a barber-surgeon and a musician.

Sir Andrew Wood and Robert Barton served on the Great Michael but this mighty man o'war, which dwarfed and out-gunned any ship then afloat, has no record of deeds befitting such an achievement in shipbuilding.

The flagship of the Scottish Navy took part in the bombardment of Carrickfergus and after the disaster of Flodden she was sold to France for a mere 40,000 francs. The Great Michael was wrecked off the French coast and is believed to have ended her days as a rotting hulk in Brest.



*Admiral Gordon, Governor of Kronstadt, last commodore of the Old Scots Navy*

Scotland suffered a severe blow in 1511 when Andrew Barton was killed and his two ships, the Lion and Jenny Pirwen, were captured after a fierce engagement with a superior English force in the Downs. The Bartons assisted Perkin Warbeck and aided Hans of Denmark. They operated with outstanding success against Flemish merchant ships in the Channel, Portuguese traders homeward bound from India, Africa and the Americas, and they had a number of engagements with English and other privateer craft to their credit.

They had also given excellent service in the campaigns to subdue the rebellious Western Islesmen. With Sir Andrew Wood and other naval commanders of that ilk they had swept the seas for Scotland.

Before Flodden the Scottish Navy consisted of some thirty ships of all types, a number being hired vessels and privateer craft but it never again reached the strength and efficiency it had attained during the reigns of James III and James IV. Mary Queen of Scots had no navy and Lord Hertford's army sacked Leith and burned Edinburgh in 1544 without encountering naval opposition.

When the Earl of Bothwell escaped to Orkney in 1567, the skippers of Dundee were ordered to fit out ships in an attempt to recapture him. Though Scotland and England now formed one kingdom, there were numerous clashes between English and Scottish privateers. Nevertheless English assistance was forthcoming against pirates and in expeditions to suppress risings in the Western Isles and the Orkneys.

Using the coast of the Spanish Netherlands and Dunkirk the "Dons" harried English and Scottish shipping and Scotland, without a navy, had to rely once more on the merchant captains of Leith, the Lothians and Fife.

In the reign of Charles I there commenced the practice - continued by Charles II and until the Union of 1707 - of levying Scottish seamen to serve with the English Navy and

the Scots acquitted themselves creditably against the Spaniards and Dutch.

In the naval operations to counter the rising led by the Earl of Glencairn in 1653-54 and the Earl of Argyle's rebellion in 1685, English ships were employed. Scottish fighting ships co-operating with the English Navy were engaged against the Jacobites and their Irish and French allies.

In June 1689, the *Pelican* and *Janet*, under Scottish colours, intercepted and captured a contingent of Jacobite Highlanders sailing from Argyllshire to Ireland. A month later, while cruising between Carrickfergus and the Mull of Kintyre they attempted to foil a landing on Mull by troops from Ireland sent to reinforce "Bonnie Dundee" but were overcome by three French frigates after a desperate encounter.

Several weeks later a Scottish privateer, the *Phoenix*, was the first ship to bring relief to beleaguered Londonderry. After shattering the boom across the Foyle the *Phoenix* and the other vessels which followed landed barrels of oatmeal for the famished defenders of "Derry."

A Gilbertian situation developed on the Bass Rock. In June, 1691, when the soldiers of the small garrison were unloading a supply ship the Jacobite prisoners closed the gates and turned the guns on their former captors.

A feeble blockade and desultory bombardments failed to subdue the rebels who were provisioned by sympathizers and French ships. Realizing that there was no purpose to be served in continuing their resistance they surrendered in April 1694. Accorded all the honours of war they were allowed to embark for France.

In the 17th century, Scotland's trade with foreign countries steadily increased and, as a result, there were several unfortunate incidents with English ships. English jealousy and political complications with Spain were mainly responsible for the failure of the Darien Expeditions from 1698 to 1700. A small number of seamen from the Scottish Navy served with these ill-fated ventures.

For many years after the Union, England regarded her northern partner as a dangerous rival. Thus, the development of overseas trade, war with France, and difficulties arising out of Scotland's dependence on English naval protection, were the principal factors which accounted for the decision in 1696 to create a permanent Scottish naval force of three frigates.

Until the *Peach Ryswick* in 1697 this small squadron effectively protected Scottish shipping in home waters from French and other commerce raiders. On the Union of 1707 the Scottish frigates were incorporated in the Royal Navy. ■

## *Sullivan Ross Zorra's Piper*

*Alexander M. Ross*

**S**ullivan Ross of Harrington, nine miles south of Stratford Ontario, was born May 9th 1828 at Badninish in Sutherland, Scotland on Achavandra Muir, just south of Skelbo Wood, about three miles north of Dornoch. In 1832 his father Alexander with his wife and four children left their croft at Bridgend.

Nothing more is known of them until August 15th 1838, when a daughter Christena was born to Alexander and his wife Margaret in Nissouri in Oxford County, Ontario. Alexander next appears in an inspection report for the Brock District Clergy Reserve (1844-1845). He was then living on a four acre clearing on Lot 32 (W<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>), Concession 3 West Zorra Township. He continued to clear his 75-acre lot and remained there until his death in 1880.

Until he was ten years old, Sullivan may have attended school in Scotland, which would account for his fine flowing handwriting and his literacy in both English and Gaelic. Once the family was on their land in Canada, schooling for Sullivan ended, and his status became that of labourer as he worked alongside his father to clear bush.

The census report of 1851 notes that the family -- father, mother, and six children -- lived in a one-storey log house just west and below the crest of a hill where a frame house was built that year to replace the log house. Even the new house must have offered cramped accommodation when Sullivan brought his bride Margaret Matheson to live there in 1857. The 1861 census listed ten members of the household.

No family records of those early years survive. Sullivan's own letters and mementos disappeared in 1913 when his widow consigned them to a bonfire in Embro. What fortunately does survive is a set of four manuscript volumes of music that Sullivan compiled. The first, dated 1864, contains both bagpipe and violin music; the other three, dated 1872, 1881, and the fourth some time after 1883, contain bagpipe music only. These volumes are held in the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau. Quebec.

Two photographs escaped the flames in 1913, one of Sullivan in kilt and plaid with his pipes under his arm and the other, taken about the year 1900, shows him seated with his wife and two nephews in front of his home -- a handsome, confident elderly man.

In his *History of Zorra and Embro*, Embro Courier Office 1909, page 31 Sullivan's son William tells of an itinerant piper, Little



*Sullivan Ross*

Johnny McKenzie, who spent a night with Sullivan's parents some time in the mid-1850's. A boy William Sutherland, the local miller's son, who was present that evening reported that Sullivan was greatly taken with the music of the pipes and said that he would very much like to learn to play the instrument. It is probable that he already played the violin, because the first 44 pages of the 1864 manuscript book contain only pieces for the violin.

This same William Sutherland remembered Sullivan teaching him to dance Highland strathspeys and reels by whistling the tunes for him. It may well have been Sullivan who encouraged William to take up the violin, on which his playing of Scottish music, especially strathspeys, was greatly admired.

The reference to Little Johnny McKenzie, who was made welcome for a week in the Harrington area, suggests that instrumental music was seldom heard along the concessions and side roads of the Zorras in the 1840's and 1850's. But folk tunes from the Highland glens did survive among the pioneers, who whistled them at their work in the fields and sang them over their household chores. Such music was purely local, existing in isolation, cut off from its source in far-away Scotland.

A change, however, came to the Zorras in 1856 with the creation of Embro's Highland Society, dedicated among other things to preserving the dress, music and literature of the ancient Caledonians. At that Society's annual games Sullivan, after walking or riding the nine miles from his home, could hear celebrated pipers play.

Carrying the music home in his head, he could try out tunes on his violin and later on his pipes. To preserve what pleased him, he transferred the notes to paper. When he began this process can not be accurately established, but the title page of his 1864 manuscript reads "Second Edition -

Improved - Strathspeys, Reels, Jigs, Hornpipes, Polkas, Scottisches, Waltzes, Cotillions, Songs &c. Arranged for the Violin By Sullivan Ross West Zorra". Later he enlarged the volume by adding selections for the bagpipe. No trace remains of the first edition, but obviously the process of transcription predates 1864.

Printed bagpipe music first appeared in 1803. "For the ensuing half-century and more, the few books of bagpipe music that were published were produced in very small numbers ... and it was not until the [twentieth] century that printed music came to be printed in quantity and commonly owned by pipers themselves" - by Hugh Cheape in *Piper Finnie's Manuscript Book*, Scottish Book Collector, Feb/Mar 1989, pages 22-23. Cheape also observes that whereas printed music had "a tendency to standardization and compromise", music in manuscript "reflects personal style, teaching, and knowledge". This makes the importance of Sullivan's manuscripts more easily understood and appreciated.

Sullivan's 1864 volume indicates how wide-ranging his tastes in music were. The American songs appearing in this volume bring to mind the slaves in the southern states and the soldiers of the American Civil War. William Ross's book on Zorra and Embro reports that American tunes like *Old Zip Coon* and *Turkey in the Straw*, brought in by escaped slaves, were in the Zorras by the mid-1850s. From 1864 on, Sullivan's interest in Scottish music, especially pipe music, becomes ever more noticeable.

Although the Free Church of Scotland to which he belonged disapproved of much secular music and dancing, its manse at Harrington 1870 received as tenant the Reverend Daniel Gordon, who remained as minister in the Harrington church for the next twenty years. His was a musical family. He himself played the bagpipe, and his daughter Greta played the piano. His six sons had good voices. Two of them, Charles and Gilbert, were members of quintets at both the Universities of Toronto and Edinburgh. Evenings in the manse were often filled with song and the sound of pibrochs on the chanter. Using some discretion, Daniel often slipped away from the glebe in the evening, up the hill to play his pipes with his neighbor Sullivan.

Daniel's son Charles (the novelist Ralph Connor), in *Postscript to Adventure*, New York, Farrar and Rinehart, pages 22 to 23, gave us the only detailed account we have of Sullivan. After praising the violin musicianship of Billy Sutherland, he wrote:

"Our nearest neighbor, Sullivan Ross, was a musical genius too. He made his own violins great and

small, and fine instruments they were, and he played them, not with the finish and delicacy of William Sutherland, but with deeper, fuller, tones. His master instrument, however, was the bagpipes. Far into the night I have often sat on the doorstep listening in the moonlight with an ache in my heart and tears not far away. Sullivan Ross was a great music lover. Any day in the middle of harvest he could easily be beguiled at the noon rest to take up his violin or tune up his pipes and regale us boys for an hour or two while the harvest waited in the field. Like Billy Sutherland, he was a "quiet" man of few words, but such was the eloquence of his fiddle or his pipes that we never missed his speech"

It is not difficult to hear the sound of Sullivan's pipes in the distance on those still summer nights, in the pages of Charles's great novels *The Man from Glengarry* (1901) and *Glengarry School Days* (1902), both of them still in print.

The 1870's were an auspicious decade for Sullivan Ross, who was becoming widely known as a piper. One of his surviving brief notes records that on May 18th 1870 he got his "new bagpipe as a present, \$50.00". In that year his mother died, and ten years later, his father. Sullivan inherited the farm and the need to provide for his wife and four children. As pioneer conditions of travel and communications improved, Sullivan's musicology was able to break free from the limits of his farm and the boundaries of West Zorra

One item that escaped the widow's bonfire was a copy of *The Highlander* (Inverness, June 3rd 1876) which contained advertisements for music books such as *Am Filidh Gaidhealach* "The best and cheapest Gaelic song book ever published ... price one shilling". Sullivan had carefully cut one of these advertisements from the paper. He was also able to get printed books of pipe music. His copy of the Donald Macdonald Collection (Second Edition, Improved. 1831) bears Sullivan's name and the date July 6th 1864. Now in the Museum, it is the only known surviving copy of the true second edition. Sullivan also had a manuscript book dated 1851 that had belonged to a pipe major in the 72nd Highlanders. His son William often spoke of the considerable correspondence that his father kept up both in English and Gaelic. In the late 1770's and into the 1880's Sullivan took part in Highland games. At the 1876 Lucknow Ontario Games, sponsored by the Caledonian Societies of Toronto, Hamilton and Kincardine, he captured awards in the

categories of Pibroch and March/ Strathspey and Reel and... "won the bagpipe championship of America against a very large class - showing more than ordinary skill in playing the bagpipes" [Woodstock Daily Sentinel Review, August 10th 1904, page 1, column 3]. In 1883 he served as a judge of "piping, dress, and dancing" at the Caledonian Games in London. A year later he was a judge at the United Saint Andrew's 2nd annual games there. Over the years he continued to add selections to his manuscript holdings, many of which bear the imprint of his own arranging. His choices reveal the breadth of his interests. Volume 2, for example, has the title "Marches, Strathspeys, Reels, Laments, Pibrochs arranged and collected by Sullivan Ross". Altogether about 1300 pieces of violin and bagpipe music appear in his collection, all neatly notated and where relevant bearing both English and Gaelic titles. The Gaelic is excellent.

Among the tunes listed in the four volumes are seven that are labeled as composed by Sullivan Ross and 21 as arranged by him. Many other tunes show his workmanship: Comparing his versions with possible printed sources, there are changes in timing, choice of grace notes and doublings, notes and phrases - the way a highly skilled performer deviates from a printed score for better expression. Sullivan's music was a time-consuming artistic activity that interfered with the success of his farming. Mortgages taken out in 1888 and 1890 suggest this. It was a splendid, daring choice he made, that the years may yet approve. Some time after 1880 Sullivan began making violins. Four of these, dated 1888, 1892, 1893 and 1896, have been traced. The 1896 instrument with its bow and case is in the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

His 1888 instrument is owned by Sullivan's great-granddaughter Celia Ross. Sullivan's violins have a fine finish, and musicians today praise them for their tone, as Charles Gordon did. In 1904 Sullivan died on the farm he had inherited, and is buried in the Knox Presbyterian Churchyard at Harrington. One of his five children, William, inherited the farm, and shared his gift as a fiddler with community friends. How Sullivan Ross, the West Zorra farmer, acquired his musicianship and his skill with fine tools -- some of which he made himself - may never be known. What remains, the four manuscript volumes and the four violins, stand as witness to his remarkable talent, giving him unquestionably a place among Canada's early makers of music. ■

#### **Editor's notes:**

*Author Alexander Ross, the well-known English scholar, died at age 94 on April 16th 2010 at Sault Ste. Marie Ontario*

