ALEXANDER MACDONELL: THE SCOTTISH YEARS
1762-1804

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1762-1804

by

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ABSTRACT

It is the purpose of this thesis to document, delineate and to some degree interpret the portion of Alexander Macdonell's life which spans his birth in 1762 and his departure for Quebec City in 1804. Macdonell was forty-two when he arrived in Canada and of the years prior to his arrival, almost nothing is known, save for a few paragraphs contained in his memoirs. On the other hand, there is no lack of information concerning his behaviour and accomplishments, in particular the establishment of parishes and schools, after he began his ministry in Upper Canada. In presenting the details of Macdonell's family background, his education, subsequent career as missionary and military chaplain, and the society which fostered such, the present work attempts to fill the gap.

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RÉSUMÉ

Le but de cette thèse est de tracer la vie d'Alexandre Macdonell, depuis sa naissance en 1762 jusqu'à son départ pour la ville de Québec en 1804. Macdonell est arrivé au Canada a l'âge de quarante-deux ans. Très peu d'informations existent sur ces premiers quarante-deux ans sauf quelques phrases écrites dans ses mémoires. Par ailleurs beaucoup fût écrit sur sa conduite et ses accomplissements après l'instauration de son ministère au Haut-Canada. Ce travail tente de combler le manque d'informations sur la vie de Macdonell en présentant des détails sur sa famille, son éducation, sa carrière comme missionaire et aumônier militaire, ainsi que sur la société qui favorisa sa démarche personelle.

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PREFACE

It is almost two hundred years since Alexander Macdonell arrived in Quebec City. He came from Scotland in response to urgings from family and acquaintances to minister to the Catholics, especially the Gaelic-speaking residents, of Upper Canada. Time and circumstance saw him expand his sphere of influence far beyond the several hundred square miles which comprised the parishes of Glengarry and St. Andrew's. In 1826 he became the first Catholic Bishop of Upper Canada and in 1831, was sworn in as a member of the Legislative Council of Upper Canada.

He was forty-two when he arrived in Canada and of these years little is known except that which he bequeathed to history in his memoirs. It is not accidental that a biography of Macdonell's Scottish career has not been forthcoming. Material in Canada to support such a study is almost non-existent. But, relevant sources do exist, not on this side of the Atlantic but in Scotland where he was born, was educated, albeit for nine years in Spain but under the auspices of the Scottish Catholic Church, and carried out his ministry amongst his countrymen in the Highlands and

elsewhere. Once located, these documents proved sufficient in number and extensive enough in content to render a biographical essay possible.

It is the purpose of this study to reveal the details pertinent to the first half of Macdonell's life which have eluded historians and biographers for so long. In so doing, some of the questions or assumptions concerning his attitudes, behaviour, ambition and dedication will be clarified.

Because information concerning Macdonell's family history and early schooling is still minimal, some emphasis has been placed on the persons who must have influenced him as a boy, youth and young man, and for whom documented accounts exist. Such were John Macdonald, the Vicar-Apostolic to the Highland District from 1773-1779; George Hay, the Vicar-Apostolic to the Lowland District from 1769-1806 (d.1811); John Geddes, the Rector of the Valladolid College from 1770-1780, and Co-adjutor to Bishop Hay from 1780-1797 (d.1799) and Alexander Cameron, who succeeded Geddes in Valladolid in 1780, and later as co-adjutor to George Hay in 1802, although he was so-named in 1797.

In similar manner, some attention has been paid to the accidental conditions which must have affected Macdonell, possibly as a child, and definitely as a clergyman. These would include the social and economic

conditions in the Highlands and the state of religion and politics throughout Scotland, especially in the decades following Culloden. Glasgow has received a generous share of descriptive focus in order to stress its desirability as a refuge for the evicted or poverty-stricken Highlanders. In 1791 when Macdonell was negotiating with the mill owners, it was not what its name came to signify some twenty-five years later, an over-crowded, slum-ridden city.

In making references to Catholic clergymen, especially when paraphrasing, the current usage of the day has been adopted. This might be confusing at first for those used to terms of address such as Father or Reverend Mr., but a little familiarity with the text and "characters" will help alleviate the matter.

Consistent spelling of Highland names proved to be almost non-existent and presented a problem, especially in quotations. Those cited most often have been identified, e.g., Angus-Aeneas, Alexander-Alaistair-Alasdair; Scotos-Scothouse-Scotus, Macdonell-Macdonald, etc. Fortunately the names are not so numerous as to lead the reader astray.

That there had to be more to Macdonell's early career than what has been made public previously is almost self-evident. It became more difficult to substantiate and document. For this reason, I should like

to acknowledge the assistance and encouragement of Professor Hereward Senior of McGill University who stalwartly believed that there was a story waiting to be discovered and documented, and who had the patience to wait for its unfolding.

My journey to Britain enabled me to discover many of the treasures housed in several archival and library collections. I would like to acknowledge and express my gratitude to the staff of these institutions, especially those in the Scottish Record Office, the National Library of Scotland, the British Library and the Public Records Office, London. In particular, I should like to thank Dom Mark Dilworth, O.S.B., and Mrs. Christine Johnson of the Scottish Catholic Archives, Edinburgh for their assistance in providing me with the numerous letters and several secondary sources from which Macdonell's story began to form; and, Mr. W.G.F. Boag, of the Scottish United Services Museum, Edinburgh, who advised me about some of the eighteenth-century peculiarities of Scottish Fencible Regiments and who kindly photographed the Colours kept in the Museum.

In Canada, the staff of the National Archives of Canada were very helpful as was Sr.Frieda Watson, C.S.J. of the Archdiocese of Toronto Archives who provided information concerning Macdonell both during my visit to the Archives and later by mail.

ABBREVIATIONS

Blairs	Blairs Letters, Scottish Catholic Archives, Edinburgh
Ms.	Manuscript
NLS	National Library of Scotland
PRO	Public Record Office
Preshome	Preshome Letters, Scottish Catholic Archives, Edinburgh
SCA	Scottish Catholic Archives
SRO	Scottish Record Office
Scotochronicon	J.F.S. Gordon. Ecclesiastical Chronicle for Scotland. Vol.IV: Journal and Appendix to Scotochronicon and Monasticon. Glasgow: John Tweed, 1867.
WO	War Office

I

THE FATHER OF THE MAN

"Since the days of Scotland's Royalty, so magnificent a funeral had not been seen in Edinburgh".[1] Thus is described the tribute paid in 1840 by the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland to the Right Reverend and Honourable Alexander Macdonell, first bishop of Upper Canada and member of the Legislative Council of Upper Canada, who had died while visiting his native land. If he was a well-known and respected personage at the time of his death, quite the contrary is true of his early years. In fact, in his Sketch of the Life of...Macdonell, J.A. Macdonell writes that "excepting what found its way into print from his own pen during his lifetime, facts concerning him, especially personally, now largely rest on tradition".[2] Yet, if the child is father of the man, then it is necessary that we separate the man and the myth, for in uncovering the early years, we might come to understand this enigmatic man of God who in 1794-95 inspired the formation of a military regiment and later, in 1813, cross in hand, led an attack on Ogdensburg, New York.[3]

The exact place of Macdonell's birth is unknown and few details of his ancestry have survived. According to Bishop Nicolson's Statua Missionis of 1700, still in effect at the time of Macdonell's birth, each missionary was required to keep a register of marriages, baptisms, conversions and deaths. However, due precautions were to be taken lest they fell into hostile hands, including, if necessary, their destruction.[4] Since the penal laws against Catholics were enforced for a good number of years after Culloden, chances are that such records as applied to Alexander Macdonell and his family were destroyed and thereby lost forever. Yet, one is able to construct a fairly accurate description of his earliest days from the bits and pieces which have survived.

Alexander Macdonell was born on July 17, 1762, near Inverness.[5] The most common place designations are Glen Urquhart on the borders of Loch Ness and Inchlaggan in Glengarry and in his own writings he stated he attended school not far from his father's house in Strathglass.[6]

His parents were Angus (Aeneas) Macdonell and Nancy Cameron and he had a sister Margaret and a half-brother, Allan, from his father's previous marriage.[7] There were at least two other brothers, but whether fully or partially related, is not clear. It is doubtful whether either of them ever married for both died

as "adventurers" in the West Indies.[8] He himself claimed to be a man of the people and not of the cadet families within the clan,[9] although he referred to the families of Glengarry, Scothouse (Scotos) and Chisholm as his cousins,[10] and was acknowledged by them as such, and Andrew Macdonell posits the probability that his mother was a distant relative of Sir Allan Cameron of Erracht.[11]

The society into which Macdonell was born was in a state of flux. The ancient traditions and customs of his people were all but expunged as punishment and retribution for their part, whether active or not, in the events of 1745. Culloden! To some it was a battle fought in defence of and out of loyalty for the true king, James VIII of Scotland, represented by his son the Prince Charles Edward Stuart; to others, the subsequent victors, it was rebellion and treason against the constituted monarch, the Hanoverian, George II. Whatever it might be called, it had all the characteristics of a civil war and for years afterwards, the Highlanders, especially those who were Roman Catholics, were treated with utter contempt and suspicion in their own country. Writing of the Scottish Catholics and their condition after Culloden, Bishop John Geddes noted that:

> more than a thousand persons were transported to America, the Highland clans were decimated and

> dispersed, Catholic chapels destroyed, the Seminary at Scalan [founded by Bishop Nicolson in 1712] plundered and burned, missals and vestments publicly committed to the flames and priests and people persecuted with merciless rigour.[12]

Alexander Macdonell was born a mere seventeen years afer the rebellion and there is every reason to believe that he must have experienced some of its aftermath. If the anecdote related by Mr. Colin Chisholm in 1882 is not a legend, then Macdonell himself would have witnessed in his own family the evidence of the brutality. The incident occurred in 1745 during the arrest of the Jesuit missionary, Mr. John Farquharson who was interrupted by a party of "red-coats" while he was celebrating Mass in the meeting house at Balanahoun. When they saw the intent of the soldiers, all the men in attendance stood up to defend the priest, but he tried to avoid a conflict by threatening with excommunication any man who crossed a hastily-drawn line. However, the women considered themselves exempt as they had not been so-named and proceeded to remove the evidence of papistry, the sacerdotals worn by the priest. As she was trying to remove the chasuble, Mairi n'in Ailean, Macdonell's aunt,[13] was struck on the head with a sabre. Although she survived, the blade had penetrated her skull and she never recovered totally from the injury.[14]

Even though the practice of the Catholic religion was proscribed and its adherents occasionally made to pay the penalty, it still flourished, relatively speaking, in the Highlands. In 1764, the district of Strathglass, an area ten miles long and six miles wide supporting a Catholic population of 1321, was served by the Jesuit Norman McLeod. The district to the south, Glengarry, was similar in size and housed two missionaries: Mr.Aeneas McGillis and Hugh Macdonald, the Vicar-Apostolic to the Highland District. The latter had taken up residence in the area to help his ailing colleague but he did not restrict himself to Glengarry for his episcopal charge was the whole Highland District.[15]

Young Macdonell was probably received into the Church by and his moral and intellectual formation entrusted to one of the above-mentioned clergymen. Despite being handicapped by a lack of competent and acceptable teachers and by a scarcity of educational materials, the pastors did their best to encourage the education of their people, especially the boys. Bishop Nicolson required that pastors, especially in the Highlands, were to establish Catholic schools in their respective districts and to select and provide for their education, such as appeared suited for the priesthood.[16] As a result,

small hedge schools were established and here were taught the rudiments of reading, writing, arithmetic and the Douai Catechism.[17]

Alexander must have shown an aptitude for learning for he received an education which seems to have been denied his brother Allan.[18] His early training came as a result of the relationship between his father, Angus, and Margaret Macdonell, widow of William Fraser 3rd, of Culbokie.

> ...the lady's residence being between my father's house and the school where I used to attend with her grandchildren at her son Culbokie's house [in Guisachan]. By way of coaxing me to remain on cold nights at her own house, she, being cousin to my father, used to take up an Rolg Sollair and read pieces of it to me.[19]

His father died when Alexander was still a boy and his mother, though a Protestant, carried out her husband's wishes that their son be prepared for the priesthood.[20] Whether this was his real intention, or it was, like Fraser of Culbokie's, to obtain a good education for his son as a stepping stone to a business career[21] is a matter for speculation. But whatever the reason, Alexander had to leave his home to reside in one of the two Seminaries which existed then: Scalan in Glenlivet or Buorblach in North Morar.

Buorblach was established for the training of the Highland youth and was founded by Bishop John Macdonald,

in 1770.[22] It had a brief existence however, for from the beginning it was beset by trouble, not the least of which was harrassment from other residents in the area. In a letter to Bishop Hay, Bishop John Macdonald mentions the anxiety of the masters in the face of insults suffered at the hands of General Fraser's tenants[23] and in 1778, Angus (Aeneas) McGillis petitioned Bishop Hay to move him to an easier mission.[24] There is no direct evidence that Macdonell studied here, for the records of the Seminary have not survived, but, according to his brief biographical entry in the Scots College in Spain, his early training has been attributed to the Highland school.[25]

The seminary in the early 1770's was laid to the charge of Bishop Hugh's nephew, John Macdonald who was to succeed his uncle as Vicar-Apostolic to the Highland district in 1773. He was an extremely conscientious man and devoted to his work. He died suddenly in 1779, having succumbed to the effects of contagion picked up while he was ministering to the ailing during one of those epidemics peculiar to the Highlands in the eighteenth century.[26] But however gentle and saintly he was, he was also a disciplinarian. One can form an idea of his attitude towards the education of the boys in his care

from a letter he sent to Mr. John Geddes, the Rector of the College in Valladolid in 1778. In it he reprimanded Mr. Geddes for his overindulgence towards the students there,

> in suffering them to entertain notions of conceitedness and a persuasion that they must be fine gentlemen and allowing them liberties which we old folks thought dangerous.[27]

As far as the daily routines and the studies were concerned, Bishop Macdonald had a very good model to follow in the sister establishment in Scalan.

The Glenlivet seminary was a modest institution which had been rebuilt after its destruction in 1745. It housed a master and a number of boys, twelve at most, and at different times was the residence of both Bishops Hay and Geddes. Life here was not easy. The boys rose at six in the morning and bathed in the chilled mountain waters of the Crombie stream. They wore the Highland dress of black and blue tartan and home-made shoes. They had meat to eat twice or thrice a week, and their breakfasts and suppers consisted of porridge.[28]

One can deduce the type of intellectual and spiritual formation the students received from an inventory of some of the books sent to Scalan in 1789. Amongst them were Altieri's Italian-English dictionary,

Eachard's Classical Dictionary, Shrevelius' Lexicon, Knox's History of Scotland and Goldsmith's History of Rome and from Mr. Thomson in Rome was requested the complete works of Theresa of Avila.[29] It is true these were destined for Bishop Hay himself, and he was not a man of the usual cut.

George Hay was born in 1729, in Edinburgh, the son of an Episcopelian non-juror who was a writer in Dalrymple's office. At age sixteen, he began studies towards a medical degree in Edinburgh but was drafted as a surgeon's apprentice into the Stuart army in 1745. Dismissed because of ill-health, he returned to Edinburgh where he reported his activities for which he was imprisoned, first in Edinburgh and later in London. It was here that he became acquainted with some fellow prisoners who happened to be Roman Catholic. Their influence on him was so great that in 1748 he took instruction and was received into the church. However, when time came for him to matriculate, the Penal Laws against Catholics prevented his receiving his diploma from the Royal College nor could he graduate from the University.

Following completion of his studies, he served as a ship's surgeon aboard a Swedish vessel but after a while he decided to become a clergyman. In 1751, at age

twenty-two, he entered the Scots College in Rome.[30]

Throughout his career as missionary, educator and especially as bishop, one of his prime concerns was the preparation of the young men and boys destined for the ecclesiastical state. They were the beneficiaries of his keen intellect and profound scholarship.

When he was about fourteen years of age, Alexander Macdonell was ready for his formal, more rigorous training in one of the Scots Colleges on the Continent. There were four which regularly accommodated the Scottish aspirants to the secular clergy : Rome, Valladolid, Paris and Douai.

Besides the political turmoil which was soon to peak on the Continent, there was a similar disruption within the Church itself. In 1764 a Royal Edict confirmed the abolition of the Society of Jesus in France and the confiscation of its property by the Crown. This was repeated in Spain in 1767 and finally the entire Order was suppressed by the Pope in 1773.

It had been customery to send Macdonell candidates to the Collège des Ecossais in Douai.[31] Whether it was because of the expressed bitterness of the expelled Jesuits which had even reached the Scottish Catholic community from its source in Namur,[32] or because the

school, now in the hands of the Scottish secular clergy, was in process of re-organizing, tradition did not prevail and young Alexander was sent to Paris.[33]

This Collège situated on the Contrescarpe du Fossé Saint-Victor[34] had been founded by David, Bishop of Moray in 1325 and had been granted letters of patent by Louis XIV in 1688 in which it was stated among other things that the scholars have all the rights and privileges of the University of Paris. It probably escaped the confusion caused by the expulsion of the Jesuits for it was under the guidance of the Prior of the Carthusians in Paris and its principal and masters were Scots secular clergy.[35]

If the tradition of the late seventeenth century was still in effect, the scholars had to prove they were of Scottish nationality, Catholic, born of Scottish parents legitimately married, to be under the age of sixteen and sufficiently prepared to enter the third or fourth classes. Only aspirants to the ecclesiastical state were to be considered and once admitted, the scholars led a very austere life, leaving the confines of the Collège only to go to classes at the Collège de Navarre.[36]

The former Hôtel de Verberie[37] which housed

the Collège was a three-storey building. The first floor contained the chapel, the library, two classrooms and the refectory. The second storey served as the residence of the college officials and masters, and the third, the student lodgings.[38] The only studies which were approved were theology and belles lettres. How these subjects were presented and the overall attitude within the Collège is matter for speculation but at least one twentieth-century writer has noted the influence of Jansenism on the school.

> Il est de fait que le jansénisme apparenté à bien des égards au calvinisme écossais et au non-conformisme en général, semble avoir fleurie dans cette institution écossaise...[39]

Even Bishop Hay was not unaware of the problem, for, writing in 1782, he referred to the singular sterility resulting from the Jansenistic bias of the Collège, remarking that from 1739 -1764, it had not provided one priest for the Scottish mission. It also irked him to remember the number of promising candidates who had left the Collège to join the army while others after their return home "brought disgrace to the Church by their apostasy".[40]

The years Macdonell spent in Paris, probably

1775-1777, were not those of tranquility, neither in the city nor in the Collège itself. These were the years preceding the Revolution and were marked with rebellious manifestations, many of which were anti-clerical in nature. Even the modest school did not escape for while there, Macdonell and some fellow students were brought out from the Collège and forced to dance around a Liberty Pole. Young Macdonell is said to have been shocked by the "outrageous proceedings" and managed to escape the impending indignity by tying a handkerchief around his knee and feigning lameness.[41]

Yet, far more serious was the state of the Collège itself. The principal from 1752-1777, Mr. John Gordon of Auchentoul, had extended the generosity of the Collège to the partisans of the exiled Stuarts and in so doing, quite impoverished it.[42] To what extent abuses had crept into its management is not clear but within a few years of Gordon's death, the Bishops of Scotland refused to send any more students there until the finances and jurisdiction of the institution were settled.[43]

Macdonell seems to have returned to Scotland prior to the Spring of 1778 without completing his studies. Whether he left voluntarily or was sent down is not known, but in the light of subsequent events, chances are it was

the former.

In the spring of 1778 four young men met in Edinburgh prior to their leaving for the Continent. Here they would be housed together, probably in Bishop Hay's residence, and outfitted and prepared for their travels. One of these was Alexander Macdonell, another, Peter Hay.[44]

Peter Hay was one of the two "promising" students from Scalan who had been selected by the new principal of the Collège in Paris, Mr. Alexander Gordon.[45] One can imagine the conversations between the two students: Macdonell who had just returned from Paris, Peter Hay, who was about to take up his residence there.

A short time later, Peter Hay returned to Scotland. He was found to be incurably ill but before he died he informed Bishop Hay about the "abuses which had crept into the Collège at Paris, and to which he attributed the defection of his fellow student and of others whom he named."[46] Whether Macdonell was one of those is still a matter for speculation but considering the encounter in Edinburgh and Macdonell's successful return to his studies, this time in Valladolid, it is more likely that he was one of the disenchanted.

Early in 1778, probably the first week of January,

the fifteen-year-old Alexander Macdonell was taken to one of the Forth ports and put aboard the "King of Spain". The custom of transporting students and goods for the College in Valladolid had been arranged by John Geddes, the Rector in Valladolid, and Captain William Lowes, a director of the Carron Ironworks.[47] The Ironworks near Falkirk had been contracted to supply guns to Spain and a journey on one of its ships, though of assistance, was not without some peril. The group which arrived in Valladolid in 1777, the year preceding Macdonell's voyage, came on a ship mounted with eighteen guns and fifty men "which served to thwart threats from American privateers, from one of which near the port of El Ferrol [they] retook and brought in a rich English ship belonging to Bristol and bound for the West Indies."[48]

However, the trip from the coast of Scotland to that of Spain seems to have been completed without incident in 1778 and Macdonell and his traveling companion, Allan MacDonald, also from the Highland District, landed at El Ferrol and proceeded overland to Valladolid where they arrived on March 28, 1778.[49] And, if their voyage was without incident, their arrival seems to have been equally uneventful, for the only reference to it is a paragraph in a letter from John Geddes to Bishop Hay

stating the two boys had arrived without the Scotch Baronage and the magazines of the previous year, and he wondered if Hay had omitted sending them or if they had been left by the way.[50]

What impressions were made on the two Highlanders as they traversed the realm of his Most Catholic Majesty have not survived but the contrast between Scotland and Spain could not have failed to leave its mark. Just the difference in climate alone must have astonished them, and although it was March, the light and warmth of the sun must have been a treat to these natives of the sullen hills. But to the Catholic whose life was somewhat adapted to living despite the Penal Laws which threatened his religion and church, the greatest contrast must have been the open practice and existence of what was outlawed in Scotland. As they travelled eastward, they must have been astonished at the number of churches, convents, monasteries and seminaries, and for the most part, their architectural magnificence. How secure they must have felt when they saw the clergy and religious, clad in their habits or clerical dress, walking openly in the streets. How unlike this was to the covert activities of the Church in Scotland where even in ordinary correspondence amongst the clergy, a type of code was used in case letters fell

into wrong hands.[51]

Yet, the trip across Spain could not have been a total reverie. Mr. Cameron, a grown man and a priest, complained of his trip from Pontevedra to Valladolid :

> by mule, finding the inns en route not at all to his taste - ill-lighted, ill-floored and bad chairs, worse tables, no windows and no curtains on the beds.[52]

There were other nuisances as well. Allan Macdonald writing from Bilbao in 1776 noted the "coachman behaved very well, except that he and his son ate and drank heartily at our expense".[53] But, of all the problems, the worst and that which would linger until remedied was what the Carron Works agent, William Lowes, described as those "inseparable concomitants of a Spanish journey - the bugs, etc." Writing humourously to his friend John Geddes in July 1774, he noted that

> notwithstanding I carried my bed, they made forced marches in the night and from the vivacity of their attacks I should conclude either that heretic [Protestant] blood is sweet or that, animated by the presence of so many saints, they sallied forth in the great cause.[52]

The Scots College in Spain was originally opened in Madrid in 1627 for the express purpose of educating secular priests for the Scottish mission, but with the suppression of the Society of Jesus on April 2, 1767,[55] the Madrid institution found itself in trouble. John Geddes was sent from Scotland to arrange the

difficulties and after much negotiation, petition and representation, he acquired the former Jesuit College of San Ambrosio in the Calle del Salvador in Valladolid. On May 31, 1771, Fr. Geddes, two professors and fifteen students made formal entry.[56] From its original buildings, the College would expand slightly in the next decade so that while Alexander Macdonell was a student there it would consist of the present [i.e.1971] central and north-south wing, a small garden, a large patio and the Capilla de la Concepcion.[57]

After the newly arrived student had rested for about three days, he was expected to enter into the life of the College. The students arose at five o'clock in the morning, at six during the winter, were served meals at eight, noon and again at eight in the evening. The other hours of the day were occupied with classes, private study, various spiritual exercises and recreation.[58]

The costume worn by the Scots was similar to that worn by the English except that instead of the English "soprana" they sported a "mateo", a full cloak cut from a perfect circle of cloth. The ordinary outfit was a black soutane and sash, and a loose gown closed at the neck but otherwise open down the front.[59]

The students received a monthly allowance of pocket

money: 11p for the younger, 16p for those in philosophy and 20p for the seniors, those in theology. From this the boys purchased articles ranging from books, canaries or pigeons, carpentry tools, snuff and garden plants or manure.[60]

Despite a shortage of masters, Mr. Geddes was able to maintain a high standard in the subjects required. In 1774 he had considered sending the Scottish students to the public schools in Valladolid but was disappointed with the quality of education, noting it had diminished since the expulsion of the Jesuits.[61]

In 1776, John Gordon, who had graduated from the Scots College in Rome, in 1764, arrived in Valladolid as vice-rector, and was assigned the classes in philosophy and grammar.[62] The same year John Macdonald, a "graduate" of the Buorblach seminary, was ordained and remained at Valladolid until 1784. To him was given the task of instruction in the humanities.[63] John Geddes remained the Rector until 1780 when he was named co-adjutor to Bishop Hay. He was replaced then by Alexander Cameron. Besides the overall administration of the College it seems the rectors were responsible for the advanced studies, especially theology.

Aside from the academic subjects, Mr. Geddes sought

to improve the musical ability of the students. "You will not be sorry to know," he wrote to George Mathison, "that we have taken Don Bernardo for some months to teach the boys singing and that he gives a half-hour apart to Messers. Gordon, Macdonald and me".[64] Whatever success he had with the others, he seems to have failed with young Macdonell. Years later, as a bishop, he never attempted to sing, not even the ordinary episcopal benediction. "I once took lessons", he said, "for six months, but after my teacher got his money, he discovered I had no voice."[65]

An indication of the level and kind of instruction can be deduced from a letter sent by Alexander Cameron to the Scottish agent in Rome, John Thomson, on June 5, 1785. In it he describes how he sought to impress the Count Pedro Rodriguez Campomanes, the great friend of Mr. Geddes, with a demonstration of the knowledge and practice in Latin, Greek and Hebrew acquired by the brighter Scots boys. "Most of them", he wrote, "read Homer with as great an ease as [they do] Virgil.[66]

The five chosen for this display were John Davidson, Alexander Cameron, aged eighteen, the Rector's nephew, William Reid, John MacDougal and Allan Macdonald, Macdonell's traveling companion of 1778.[67] The first four were all from the Lowland District and were all

received into the College in 1780, the first year of Cameron's administration. The only outsider was Allan Macdonald who later was to gain some renown as a theologian and a linguist.[68]

Alexander Macdonell does not seem to have been an outstanding scholar nor indeed even one with abilities in any one field. John Geddes, in 1780, noted he was a studious boy,[69] and later in 1782, the new rector, Alexander Cameron, omitted his name as one of the gifted boys.[70] He did note though to Bishop Geddes that "Big Sandy" was not always very strong.[71] This may have been because like his classmate John McDougal he could not take the climate, especially the summer heat, or because he was suffering the effects of growing tall. Even his name Big Sandy indicates that by this date he had reached much of his eventual height of six feet four.[72] To Peter Grant, in Rome, however, he wrote that there were three good subjects from the Highlands in "Rhetorick": Sandy Macdonell and Allan Madonell [sic] from Glengarry and Angus MacEachern from Moidart.[73]

The mission oath whereby a candidate vowed to serve the Scottish mission and be subject to the will of his bishop was administered when the candidate was judged to have been sufficiently long in the college and was old

enough for the oath to be taken. On April 4, 1779, Alexander Macdonell, along with Angus Macdonald, Retland's son, Andrew Dawson, Angus MacEachern, Angus MacGillivray and Allan Macdonald, took the oath and according to John Geddes "are now engaged and I will venture to say, are all promising".[74] The oath was binding for life and if a cleric wished to be released from it he had to apply to his bishop for such. In 1803-04 this would cause some trouble for Alexander Macdonell who was on the point of leaving the Scottish mission for Canada.

It is difficult in retrospect to select those students in the College who might have become friends. Of the group whom Alexander Macdonell met during the nine years he spent in Valladolid, the friendship which was most enduring seems to have been that between Angus MacEachern and himself.

This young man was born in Moidart, a coastal area whose sea-legacy was to prove of value to the city of Valladolid in 1788. He was three years older than Macdonell but seems to have been ordained the same year and together they left for the Scottish Mission in 1787. He was sent to the Hebrides but in 1790 left with a group of emigrant Highlanders for Prince Edward Island, then known as St. John's Island. He was to become the bishop of

Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton and New Brunswick in 1821, with his fellow-ordinand Alexander Macdonell, then a bishop, being the co-consecrator.[75]

Mention has been made of the various hobbies in which the students indulged. Young MacEachern owed his craft to his maritime origin because he was able to build himself a rowboat which he bequeathed, perforce no doubt, to the College after he left.

In February of 1788 after several days of torrential rain, the River Esqueva flooded, reaching a depth of six feet in the lower areas. Dr. Cameron, Mr. Gordon and several students proceeded to launch MacEachern's boat and thereby were able to rescue more than a dozen families. Their heroism was marked out for special mention in an official letter from Count Floridablanca on behalf of the King.[76]

A reluctant friendship seems to have formed between Angus (Aeneas) Chisholm and Macdonell, although there was a distance between them of about three years in age and at least four in scholarity. In fact Chisholm would be a master in charge of the humanities classes during the last four years of Macdonell's residence in Valladolid. Yet, they both came from the same district, Strathglass, and were related as cousins.[77] In 1788 they would be

serving neighbouring missions in the Highlands.

In 1792, Angus' elder brother John Chisholm, was made Vicar-Apostolic to the Highland District and both became involved, although in a somewhat half-hearted way, with the formation of Glengarry's Regiment in 1794.[78] But it was Angus Chisholm's wit which has been bequeathed to us in the form of an epitaph written for Macdonell as he took leave of the Scottish Mission to become a chaplain with the Regiment :

> Here lies Sandy tall
> A politician and that is all[79]

One might rightly question the sincerity of a friendship which sponsored such a remark.

The most powerful influence on Alexander Macdonell was undoubtedly that of his teachers, especially the rectors. How they dealt with problems, how they approached their work, the daily chores, the life of the Ministry : all this would be noted for possible and probable emulation. Yet, two more different personalities could not have been other than those of the two rectors who were responsible for Valladolid during Macdonell's years of residence there: John Geddes and Alexander Cameron.

The early life of John Geddes is quite similar to that of Macdonell. He was born on September 9, 1735,

the son of an obscure tenant-farmer on the Gordon estates in Corridoun. In 1742 he began to study in the parish school in Rathven but following the upsets after Culloden, he was kept at home. His education was taken in hand by the missionary from Preshome, Alexander Godsman and in 1749, he was sent to the Scots College in Rome. He was ordained there in 1759 and returned to Scotland the same year.[80]

Geddes' most notable characteristic was his ability to get along with people at all levels, the most humble, and the most powerful. Perhaps it was with this in mind that he was sent in 1770 to Madrid to arrange the affairs of the Scots College. After the expulsion of the Jesuits the property had been seized by the Irish who had appropriated its rents to their houses in Seville and Alcalà. Through careful negotiation and a well-documented presentation of the Scottish case, Geddes met with success and the Madrid property was restored. However, Geddes preferred to see the College located in Valladolid and again through diplomacy and tact, he secured the College of San Ambrosio.[81]

During his ten-year residence in Spain, Geddes made the acquaintance of many notables but the deepest friendship was formed between Count Pedro Rodriguez

Campomanes and himself and it was through his assistance that many of the College's difficulties were resolved. When finally on November 30, 1780 he was consecrated bishop, the ceremony was conducted by the Spanish primate, the Archbishop of Toledo, and his secular patron was no less a personage than the Duke of Hijar, one of the most powerful of the Aragon grandees. A few days after his consecration, he was brought to court and presented to Charles III.[82]

His attitude towards the students in his care was always one of concern and affection. Just prior to his departure for Scotland he wrote to Peter Grant in Rome "We have now twelve students, really excellent boys, with whom I am so well pleased that I am truly sorry to leave them".[81]

The difference between Geddes and his successor Alexander Cameron can be appreciated just from one incident which occurred after the latter's arrival in 1780. The newly consecrated Bishop Geddes had urged his colleague to accompany him while he took his leave from the many friends and contacts he had made, mostly in Madrid. By this means, Geddes intended to open the doors for Mr. Cameron. He, however, preferred to do it his way and did not relish the thought of playing second fiddle to Bishop Geddes on the social circuit.[84] It was only in 1784 that Mr. Cameron finally visited Madrid.[85]

Alexander Cameron was born July 28, 1747 (O.S.) at Auchindryne in Braemar. After a brief education in the local schools he was sent to Scalan for four years after which he went to the Scots College in Rome. While there he was favoured by the Cardinal Duke of York in recognition of the loyalty of the clan to the Stuart cause in 1715 and 1745. He was ordained there in 1772.[86] While in Rome he had made his mark as a scholar and he was repeatedly entreated by the Jesuits to join their Order. The emphasis on training for the ministry and to a degree, scholarship, would be an important factor during his years as rector of the Valladolid College and later as Co-adjutor to Bishop Hay.

After Mr. Cameron became the director of the College, the first thing he did was to revise the rules, especially those concerning socializing and relationships with the students of other colleges. Students were not allowed to leave the college unless exempted, and were not permitted to mix with seculars at all. If one received an invitation from a family he was able to attend only if accompanied by one of the masters. He also shortened the vacation period which in Geddes' day had been from mid-August until the first of October. Cameron had it from September 29 to October 29.[87]

It is not surprising that Cameron's first act was to tighten up the socializing rules for he was not at all inclined to be gregarious himself, and almost boasted of having few friends and was seldom outside the College.[88] He was never able to make friends as Geddes had done, and in fact, was inclined to be rather hostile towards some of those to whom Geddes had much endeared himself. One such was a Scottish nun, a Mrs. Campbell, who with her daughter, were members of the Salesian Order in the Visitation Convent, Madrid. On one occasion, Geddes had asked Mr. Cameron to be remembered to Mrs. Campbell and to ask her prayers. The Rector wrily responded, "I am persuaded Mrs. Campbell prays for you and I scarce think I shall interrupt her, as you desire me to say nothing else to her. I never visited her daughter: I was in company with her and did not like her".[89] He seems to have been uneasy with women in general, perhaps because like so many of his fellow clergymen he had been bereft of their company for much of his life. An indication of his perception of women can be seen in his remark to Bishop Geddes about one of Madrid's aristocratic families. "There is", he wrote, "the same exterior harmony there was in your time between the aunt and the niece but - they are both woemen[sic] : varium et mutabile semper".[90]

But, Mr. Cameron maintained two close friendships: that with Campomanes and one which he himself developed, that with the new Bishop of Valladolid, Manuel Joaquin Moron. This latter friendship brought great relief to the College for the previous bishop, Don Antonio Joachim de Soria had been a thorn in the side of Mr. Geddes.[91]

If he seemed unwilling to expend energy on socializing, Mr. Cameron could mix successfully in company with those of similar interests and pursuits and where his talents and abilities came to the fore. In 1784 he and the Vice-Rector, John Gordon, became founding members of the Royal Economic Society of Valladolid. This Institute was formed to improve and further the prosperity of the city and surrounding district,[92] and was one of several approved by the reform-minded King, Charles III. Here, Cameron would have met the nobles, churchmen and members of the wealthy middle class who were the backbone of these societies.[93]

Though personal preference may account for a part of this seemed shunning of Spanish society, the rectors and masters may have had good reason for keeping their students away from influences exterior to those of the College. It was not that the society was corrupt or immoral, but rather that it was totally unlike that which the young missionaries

would encounter when they returned to Scotland. And, in no other area was this more apparent than in the church itself especially its size, wealth and power.

In comparing the Catholic population of Spain and Scotland, one does the latter country an injustice, for it was nearly impossible for any country other than Spain to be so Catholic, let alone one established in Presbyterianism. In the Spain of 1787 there were 61,998 men and women who had taken vows, and 71,070, who had not, who lived in convents, and in addition, there were 70,170 secular clergy. This amounted to a ratio of one in every fifty-two persons.[94] In 1800, a church census of Scotland showed that there were three bishops, forty priests, twelve churches and 30,000 faithful,[95] a ratio of one clergyman for every seven hundred Catholics, and one per every 35,000 Scottish citizens.

The wealth of the Spanish church came from various sources, including rents from properties, income from produce, tithes and revenues from baptisms, marriages, funerals and other ecclesiastical functions, and as late as 1787, there were 3148 towns of one type or another under the direct rule of the Spanish clergy.[96] Under Charles III, and especially through the efforts of his ministers Campomanes and Floridablanca, much fiscal reform had been

effected. Yet, despite this and in particular the confiscation of the Jesuit properties by the Crown in 1767, the wealth of the church has been estimated to have amounted to 1,101,753,430 reales at the end of the century.[97] By contrast, George Hay, writing to Bishop Smith in 1765, estimated the church funds in Scotland to be about £340.[98] Further, they were almost totally dependent on Propaganda Fidei for their support.

The power of the Church, once used by the state as a cudgel to suppress dissent, though in decline, was still fairly substantial. The most famous instrument to effect "order" had been the Inquisition but in the latter eighteenth century its attention had been focussed on new ideas, both philosophic and religious, and much of its energy was spent in defending itself from the encroachment of the royal reform. In general, however, greater leniency was displayed and the Inquisition was no longer the much feared institution it had once been.[99]

Yet, its decision could still shock those unused to such tactics. Mr. Geddes wrote with sympathy for a lawyer in Madrid who having dared to speak against the immortality of the soul, had been summoned before the Inquisition. He was reprimanded by the Grand Inquisitior, sent to a convent in Toledo to learn Christian doctrine and was ordered to

have a catechism hanging at his neck. "I hear", wrote Geddes to Bishop Hay in 1776, "that he is dead of shame and vexation."[100]

On February 16, 1787, five months short of his twenty-fifth birthday, Alexander Macdonell was ordained a priest in Valladolid.[101] He remained there until late summer when with Angus MacEacharn he left the College on August 20[102] and sailed from Bilbao for London in the beginning of September.[103]

He had successfully completed his studies and met the moral and spiritual requirements set by the bishops of Scotland and the superiors of the Scots College. From obscure beginnings he had tasted life in a Paris fraught with rebellion and instability. For nine years, a period spanning adolescence and maturity, he had lived away from his native land, in a country totally unlike his own. He had been influenced by two very different superiors : the urbane, discreet and gentle, John Geddes, and the demanding, wry and donnish, Alexander Cameron, both of whom showed a marked concern for their charges.

What were the lessons learned apart from formal studies? What traits and what methods would he adopt from the examples shown him by the men whom he must have held in high esteem? To what extent did the splendour of the

Spanish Church overshadow his memory of the simple and rather hard-pressed mission in Scotland?

Alexander Macdonell was setting out, a missionary to his native Highlands and within the next few years, he would show to his superiors the abilities and at times, lack of them, which marked him as one of the most unusual of the Valladolid alumni.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER ONE

1. J.A. Macdonell, A Sketch of the Life of the Hon. and Rt. Rev. Alexander Macdonell, p.53.

2. Ibid., p.3-4.

3. Ibid., p.85-86.

4. A. Bellesheim, History of the Catholic Church in Scotland, 4:171.

5. A. Macdonell. Memorial to Lord Bathurst, 1836. Kingston, Ont. Archdiocesan Archives. Macdonell mentions he is 74 making the year of his birth 1762.

6. H.J. Somers, "The Life and Times of the Hon. and Rt. Rev. Alexander Macdonell", p.9. In 1782 the rector of Valladolid, Alexander Cameron, mentioned in a letter that Macdonell was from Glengarry. Cameron to Grant, 16 July 1782, SCA Blairs. His father's family might well have originated there but the families with whom he claimed kinship later were all from Strathglass.

7. Archibald Cameron Macdonell in an "Address given at St. Raphael's, June 15, 1930", Toronto Archdiocesan Archives, names his mother as Marsali [Marjorie] Cameron of Clunes; Andrew Macdonell in his genealogical chart, SCA, Macdonell V, as Nancy Cameron; and Gerard Brassard, Armorial des Evêques du Canada, p.220, as Ellen (Margaret) Cameron. All three agree that his father was Angus Macdonell.

8. In 1794 writing to Bishop Hay, Macdonell mentions having lost a brother and four cousins germane to the West Indies. Macdonell to Hay, 17 February 1794, SCA, Blairs, and again in 1798, in a letter to his cousin Margaret Fraser, he writes he has learned of his favourite brother's death in Jamaica. Macdonell to Fraser, 6 May 1798, SCA, Preshome.

9. Andrew Macdonell, "The Glengarry Fencibles", p.342.

10. SCA, Blairs and Preshome, passim

11. Andrew Macdonell, p.343.

12. Bellesheim, p.192.

13. She was probably his father's sister. Mairi n'in Ailean in English is daughter of Allan, and according to Andrew Macdonell, Allan was Alexander's grandfather.

14. Odo Blundell, The Catholic Highlands of Scotland, 1: 199-201. The date 1745 is not mentioned in the text. However, the entry for John Farquharson in the Scotochronicon, p.545, mentions his arrest and transport to Edinburgh, still attired in his sacerdotals.

15. Roderick Macdonald, "The Highland District in 1764," p.149.

16. Bellesheim, p.172.

17. J.F.S.Gordon, Scotochronicon, p.296.

18. A copy of Allan Macdonell's will dated 1824 shows he was unable to sign his name, using a mark (X) instead. PAC MG.55/24 no.334.

19. PAC MG24.J13, p.36.

20. Andrew Macdonell, p.341.

21. Macdonald to Hay, 10 November 1775, SCA, Blairs. Bishop Macdonald was somewhat miffed because people expected their sons to be educated by the Church at no expense to themselves and rightly so, for many of the tacksmen and prosperous tenant farmers owed their training to the Scotch Colleges.

22. C. Johnson, Developments in the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, p.72.

23. Macdonald to Hay, 3 January 1777, SCA, Blairs.

24. McGillis to Hay, 3 August 1778, SCA, Blairs.

25. Taylor, p.322.

26. Scotochronicon, p.12 & 178.

27. Taylor. p.112.

28. Scotochronicon, p.277.

29. Ibid., p.292. The books were probably Ferdinando Altieri. Dizionario italiano ed inglese, 1st ed. 1726; Laurence Eachard. The Classical and Geographical Dictionary, London, 1715. Cornelius Schrevel. Lexicon manuale

graeco-latinum...London, 1685, 1753,1774, etc. John Knox. A View of the British Empire, More Especially Scotland, 1st ed. 1784; Oliver Goldsmith, The Roman History...1st ed. 1769.

30. Ibid.,p. 15-20, passim

31. Bernard Kelly, The Fate of Glengarry, p.17.

32. Scotochronicon, p.95. Bishop Hay writing to the Abate Grant, August 16, 1770, mentioned the ungenerous behaviour of our Friends of the Society..."they can never digest the vexation it gave them to see that house put into our (the Scots secular clergy) hands". The Jesuits had left Douai for Namur taking with them the furniture and valuables belonging to the College, and they thought, to themselves.

33. Kelly, loc. cit. It was usual for the bishops to discuss the student-missionaries who had been sent from Scotland to Douai, Paris, Rome or Valladolid. Yet, in the available correspondence from Bishop John Macdonald from 1773-1779 (SCA, Blairs), there is no mention of Alexander or Sandy Macdonell or Big Sandy as he was called in Valladolid later on. Reference is made to Alexanders Macdonald and/or Macdonell, but either the age, parentage or place assignations show them to be other than the future bishop of Kingston, U.C.

34. Violette M. Montagu, "The Scottish College in Paris", p. 402.

35. Scotochronicon, p.247.

36. Montagu, p. 403.

37. Ibid., p.402f.

38. Ibid., p. 403.

39. Claude Nordmann, "Les Jacobites écossais en France au XVIIIe siècle," p.87.

40. Bellesheim, p.252.

41. J.A. Macdonell, p.4.

42. Scotochronicon, p.138.

43. Ibid., p.250.

44. Ibid., p.140 & p. 250. In his letter to Bishop Grant dated April 7, 1778, Bishop Hay refers to the two sets of boys, one group bound for Valladolid, the other for Paris.

Later, reference is made to Peter Hay, who left for Paris in 1778.

45. Idem.

46. Ibid., p.250.

47. Taylor, p. 100.

48. Ibid., p.101.

49. Ibid., p.322.

50. Geddes to Hay, 29 May 1778, SCA, Blairs.

51. Scotochronicon, passim, SCA, Blairs, et al. Bishops were mentioned by using the names of their titualr diocese, eg. Mr. Tiberiop was Hugh Macdonald, Bishop of Tiberiopolis; Mr. Dauly, George Hay, Bishop of Daulien. Honorifics, such as Right Reverend, or His Excellency, etc., were not used. Missionaries were referred to as physicians, the students in the Colleges, as apprentices. Rome could be either Hilltown or Old Town.

52. Taylor, p.120.

53. Ibid., p.76.

54. Ibid., p.100-101.

55. William McGoldrick, "The Scots College, Madrid", p.92.

56. Ibid., p.107.

57. Taylor, p.128.

58. Ibid., p.111.

59. Ibid., p.88-89.

60. Ibid., p.105.

61. Ibid., p.97.

62. Ibid., p.314.

63. Ibid., p.320.

64. Geddes to Mathison, 21 December 1778, SCA, Blairs.

65. J.A. Macdonell, p.34.

66. Taylor, p. 134f.

67. Idem. It was in William Reid's house that Macdonell died in 1840.

68. Ibid., p.32.

69. Geddes to Hay, 3 April 1780, SCA, Blairs.

70. Cameron to Hay, 12 July 1782, SCA, Blairs.

71. Cameron to Geddes, 12 July 1782, SCA, Blairs.

72. J.A. Macdonell, p.28.

73. Cameron to Grant, 16 July 1782, SCA, Blairs.

74. Geddes to Hay, 5 April 1779, SCA, Blairs.

75. Taylor, p.322.

76. Ibid., p.136-37.

77. John Chisholm to Alexander Cameron, 5 June 1803, SCA, Blairs. Refers to Macdonell as his "military cousin".

78. Chisholm to George Hay, 2 March 1794, SCA, Blairs.

79. A. MacWilliam, "The Glasgow Mission 1792-99", p.88f.

80. Scotochronicon, p.454-55.

81. Idem.

82. Taylor, p.122.

83. Geddes to Grant, 2 September 1780, SCA, Blairs.

84. Taylor, p.120.

85. Ibid., p.140.

86. Scotochronicon,p.458.

87. Taylor, p.120.

88. Ibid., p.135.

89. Cameron to Geddes, 18 October 1787, SCA, Blairs.

90. Cameron to Geddes, 1 July 1784, SCA, Blairs.

91. Taylor, p.117.

92. Ibid., p.135.

93. Charles E. Chapman, A History of Spain (New York: The Free Press, 1965,c1918) p.462.

94. Ibid., p.454.

95. Bellesheim, p.262.

96. Chapman, p.452.

97. Ibid., p.454.

98. Scotochronicon, p.49.

99. Chapman, p.456-57.

100. Taylor, p.103.

101. J.A.Macdonell, p.4.

102. Taylor, p321-322.

103. Cameron to Geddes, 18 October 1787, SCA, Blairs.

II

THE FARM - ON MISSION IN THE HIGHLANDS

It would have been natural for young Macdonell to keep alive the memory of his native land, its traditions and its peoples during the years of exile in Spain. It had been nine years since he had seen his native glens. If he expected to find conditions as he had left them or even improved, he was mistaken. If anything, and for varied reasons, they had become worse.

The Highlands Sandy Mor had left in 1778 were still reeling from the aftermath of Culloden, although the battle itself had occurred some thirty-two years earlier. The incidents of revenge and retaliation had all but disappeared and feelings of bitterness, if they existed, owed their origins to other than vendettas and internecine conflict. Yet the whole area was in a state of upheaval one of the causes of which was the destruction of the ancient social structure - the clan.

The clans as such were not touched directly, but it was by means of divesting the chiefs of their power over life and limb and the total disarming of the Highlanders which ultimately led to this end. For

centuries, the chief and his clansmen, who were mostly tenant-farmers and crofters, lived according to a pact in which all were one in loyalty and support of him, and he, duty-bound to look to their welfare. How the ordinary people were treated depended on his benevolence but, the chief knew well that he relied upon able-bodied men to support him in his interminable skirmishes and raids. By eliminating the chief's power to call on men-at-arms, his need for those men was simultaneously destroyed. Thus, one of the surest bonds within the clan system was eradicated and the relationship between the chief and his clan members became one of social propriety and more often than not, through his tacksmen and factors, became one of business only.

The tenants, the lowest on the echelon, worked the land, kept goats or sheep for their own use and raised the black cattle to pay the rent. The sub-tenants, the cottars or crofters, were the labourers who worked primarily for the tenants. In most areas of the Highlands, nature was far from generous. Those who lived in coastal areas were more fortunate for diets could be supplemented with fish and there was sporadic employment in the kelp industry. No matter how poor the living condition, it was the aim of every community to be self-sufficient which

they were in all except food.[1]

If the food supply was at best ample, the same cannot be said for the housing conditions. The nobility, gentry, clergy, sheep-farmers and the inn-keepers lived well, but contemporary writers have described the accommodations of the peasants as wretched. The exterior of peasant houses was of stone and pebbles mingled together and mounted without plaster to a height of about five-and-a-half feet. Oat straw placed on a few poles constituted the roof and holes in the walls became the windows or doorways. The windows were covered at night by wooden shutters which were left open during the days. The floor was bare earth and the inside walls were usually of turf mounds which would be used as fuel later. Furnishings were scanty and crude: a few boards tacked together to form a table, perhaps a chair and a few stools. The utensils were a single kettle, a saucepan, a few coarse platters, wooden dishes and spoons, a bedstead or two, straw mattresses and a few coarse rugs.[2]

After 1746, a new breed of Highland landowner had evolved : the hard-nosed entrepreneur. He was not necessarily a native, for many of the improvers were either from the Lowlands or northern England. All had the same objective : to make the miles of moorland and hillside

pay and the best means of effecting this was through the raising of sheep for market or for their wool. It is not within the context of this essay to posit the various problems which the Highland lairds faced but suffice it to say that many were hard-pressed financially and were forced to take drastic measures in order to turn a profit. The methods they used, however, have merited for them the odium of some two centuries for often it was through intimidation, rack-renting and eviction that the tenants and crofters were moved from the land to make way for sheep. "This change," wrote David Stewart some years later,

> appears in the character and condition of the Highlanders and is indicated not only in their manners and persons, but in the very aspect of their country. It has reduced to a state of nature, lands that had long been subjected to the plough, and which had afforded the means of support to a moral, happy and contented population; it has converted whole glens and districts...into scenes of desolation...The spirit of speculation has invaded these mountains which no foreign enemy could penetrate and expelled a brave people whom no warlike intruder could subdue.[3]

Not all movement from the Highlands owed its impetus to the harshness of uncaring landowners. The enticement of a presumed easier life elsewhere certainly played a role, especially in times of famine and other natural disasters. Organized emigration had been initiated mostly by entrepreneurial tacksmen as far back

as 1740 and for most of the eighteenth century it was opposed by the land-owners.[4]

Many of the Highlanders had removed to urban centres such as Glasgow and Edinburgh where they sought employment as day-labourers, street porters or as workers in the mills which were springing up especially in the south-west. In 1777, Bishop George Hay took a census of the Edinburgh parish and found there were some four hundred Gaelic-speaking persons.[5]

The second half of the eighteenth century saw Britain involved in several military engagements, notably with France and the rebellious Colonies in North America. Highlanders enlisted in great numbers both for service in the regular regiments of the line and in those established for home defence, the so-called fencible regiments. At the end of the various campaigns some returned to the Highlands but others chose to remain as settlers, especially in North America. While their numbers may have seemed insignificant at first, these early settlers acted to lure their kinfolk and friends still on Highland farms or in the growing communities of exiles in the cities.

Of the three options the one that probably appealed most to the Highlander was that of being in a position to possess his own land. It was with a heavy

heart that he left his native soil but it was becoming apparent as the century progressed that there would be little reason to remain on a farm from which he could be evicted arbitrarily.

In May 1772 some two hundred emigrants sailed from Uist for St. John's Island, now Prince Edward Island. This was a reaction to a religious persecution by Colin Macdonald of Boisdale against his Catholic tenants. The emigration was covertly sponsored by Bishops George Hay and John Macdonald who with the aid of the Catholic Bishop of London, Richard Challoner, raised enough money to transport thirty-six families.[6] Even though they were hard-pressed, the poor, especially the women, were reluctant to leave. Eventually, John Macdonald, Glenaladale, was able to take with him sixteen subsidized families and several hundred paying passengers who were more than willing to leave.[7]

Those who chose to emigrate usually went in communities and paid their passage. Such would have been the emigration of the four hundred, mostly Catholics and tenant farmers, from Glengarry, Glenmoriston, Glenurquhart and Strathglass in 1773. This was the group which set out aboard the Pearl, under the sponsorship of three Macdonells: John of Drynachan and Leek, and his younger brothers, Allan of Collachie and Alexander, of Wester Aberchalder.[8] They

were destined for lands in the Mohawk Valley of New York and were under the protection of William Johnson, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs in New York.[9]

In 1786, another group of some six hundred left the Glengarry estate with their clergyman, Alexander Macdonell[10] of the Scotos (Scothouse and sometimes Scotus) family. These were bound for the recently established settlement of Glengarry on the north bank of the St. Lawrence in what is now eastern Ontario, where many of them would be reunited with other members of families who had left some thirteen years earlier.[11]

This then was the setting into which the newly--ordained missionary would be sent in 1787. Poverty was not something new but the depopulation of the land was beginning to cause a lot of misgiving. The arbitrary eviction of tenants was deemed cruel and heartless, but expedient, and for the most part, it was tolerated. But, when whole populations removed voluntarily, these same landlords began to realize their own vulnerability. Even the Catholic bishops were concerned for in a letter to the Scottish agent in Rome Bishop Geddes wrote that the "Highland Missions were likely to suffer from the depopulation of those tracts of country to make way for sheep-farms".[12] Nor was the temperament of those remaining

very happy. R. Heron, writing in 1792, noted that the:

> Highlanders seemed hurt that a Highland landowner should let his lands to a stranger in preference to themselves and that they had no other course to follow but leave the country.[13]

The scarcity of adequate food and shelter in the Highlands was matched in another, to some a vital if less dramatic area. This was the lack of Catholic missionaries to minister to the population scattered throughout the Highlands. This yearning to have a priest among them is reflected in a letter sent to Bishop Geddes by Isabella Macdonell in Garvabeg after Alexander Macdonell had arrived.

> There was one circumstance which distressed us much here, which is now thank God removed by the settlement of a priest-a very fine young man whom you saw at Edinburgh, a Mr. Alex^{r} Macdonell.[14]

It is not to be wondered at then, that Bishops Geddes and Hay were impatient to greet the recently ordained Valladolidians. Even though they had left the Scots College on August 20 Geddes seemed to have expected news of them as early as mid-September,[15] a little unrealistically when one considers the number of weeks needed to travel from Valladolid to the Coast of Spain, the voyage to Britain and then the trip from London to Edinburgh.

A little patience was all that was needed for as of October 11, they were the guests of Bishop Geddes in Edinburgh.[16] The visit provided a brief respite from

their journey, a chance to learn what was expected from them and to renew the acquaintance of the man who had welcomed them both to the College some nine years earlier. The visit had to be short for the winter season was approaching and travelling would become more difficult, especially in the Highlands. Angus MacEachern would set off for Uist and the Islands, Alexander Macdonell, for the Central Highlands.

Bishop Alexander Macdonald, the Vicar-Apostolic to the Highland District, was responsible for placing the missionaries and he "thought it best to place [Macdonell with Mr. Angus (McGillis?) in Lochaber and as Badenoch was] joined to that mission, he thought it expedient that he should settle there".[17]

Macdonell had spent his youth and early maturity away from the hills, in an urban setting and in a country which was the very opposite of his own in terms of national wealth, the riches of nature, in culture and religious practice. This experience of an environment so contrary to what he was about to encounter in the Highlands could only add to what would normally be a very trying period in his career.

In his first letter to Bishop Geddes, Mr. Macdonell apprises his recent host of his situation. It

is amusing to note that his salutation is a somewhat awkward "Sir". Whether this was for reasons of discretion, keeping in mind that Catholics, especially the clergy, were still suspect,[18] or because Macdonell was unfamiliar with the usual "Most hon. & Dear Sir", is not clear, but the tone of the letter indicates that he was frustrated by the difficulty and poverty of his station, and perhaps sacrificed style in order to make an impression.

He begins by not apologizing for not writing, an opening, which if not idiocyncratic of the period was then peculiar to Macdonell, for it is a common trait in most of his letters. There follows a narration of the hardship of the mission :

> Since my arrival in the Highlands I have been always wandering from place to place, always in a hurry and hardly had time to acquaint you or any other of my best friends of my situation.[19]

He notes how Bishop Alexander Macdonald thought it best to place him in Badenoch and that he should settle there:

> So Badenoch is now my mission and a new one in every sense of the word, and I can assure you Sir, I feel the effects of that very sensibly.[20]

There is little doubt that Macdonell would feel the effects very sensibly if for no other reason than the very nature of the terrain and the size of the area

served. The Parish of Badenoch was bounded by Craigellachie in the east, Lochaber in the west, a distance of some forty miles, Mar and Atholl in the south and the watershed of the Findhorn in Strathdearn in the north, a distance of about twenty miles. The lowest point was 700 feet above sea-level, the highest, Braerich Ridge with an elevation of 4149 feet.[21]

In 1880, James Robertson described Badenoch as having

> large hay meadows and comparative prosperity of farming on both sides of the river. Cottages were crowded into hamlets the farmers living in clusters and in one place, their land open and in alternate ridges: in other places the land was enclosed and was controlled by a wealthy tenant. The less affluent people had land divided into lots of a few acres. The hills around Badenoch were not all that good for grazing and was 'inhabited' by foxes, eagles and other creatures of prey.[22]

Yet, despite the indication of prosperity in the meadows, Badenoch had suffered in times of dearth. One such occasion was the famine of 1782 when MacPherson of Badenoch reported great numbers of people dying.[23]

To add to the vagaries of nature, the population of Badenoch had to abide the schemes of improvers and raising rents. From 1762-1785 they rose from £470 to £1347. As a result of this and because of the lure of the manufacturies in the towns and possibilities of a new

life abroad, depopulation in Badenoch had begun before large-scale sheep-farming was introduced.[24]

There was one incident of eviction which occurred in 1770 which, while an isolated one, not only illustrates the arbitrary nature of these actions but indicates a degree of hostility against Catholics in this area of the Highlands. The eviction concerned a whole section of the population of Aberarder, mostly Catholics.

> An unmarried, half-pay chaplain thought he would better his worldly circumstances, do his duty to his cloth and religious persuasion... if he got Aberarder for a sheep-walk and cleared off the whole Roman Catholic possessors...[25]

Yes, Badenoch was going to be a proving ground for this young and inexperienced clergyman. Yet, in the selection of his complaints to Geddes, one suspects that the comparative luxury of Spain had not yet worn off. He notes the lack of vestments, altar linens and the lack of a house in which to say Mass, one in which to live notwithstanding. It is true, he was writing to a superior and one who was in a position to afford him some relief, for he was Procurator of the Scottish Mission, but, in the light of the destitution and hardship which surrounded him, these complaints seem trite.

Perhaps he was overwhelmed by the enormity and difficulty of the task which confronted him. He was only

twenty-five and found himself relatively alone amidst a people some of whom were friendly and others, outright hostile. He mentioned this isolation from colleagues in the mission to Bishop Geddes and lamented the impossibility of immediate direction or assistance from superiors. As a remedy to his being cut off from the main stream of society he requested second-hand newspapers from Edinburgh.[26]

The older pastors were aware of the malaise of the younger and inexperienced clergy and tried when possible to alleviate the situation. Such was probably the intention of Bishop Macdonald when he brought the young priest with him on a pastoral visit to Lochaber and Glengarry in the autumn of 1788.[27] This seems to have encouraged Macdonell somewhat and probably did a great deal to help him establish friendships and relationships which would be of assistance in building up his mission, especially in Lochaber. There is also a good possibility that Bishop Macdonald introduced his companion to the young Chief of Clan Glengarry, Alasdair Ranaldson Macdonell who had succeeded his father on July 11, 1788.[28] This might have been the first encounter between the priest who claimed loyalty to Glengarry and the then fifteen-year-old chief with whom he would have much to do in the following decade.

Among the tasks he was required to do in addition to the ordinary ones of his ministry were those of acquiring or building a chapel and of seeking adequate accommodation for himself. In both undertakings he experienced a good deal of opposition.

From the very first he announced his intention to build a house even though he was without means and expected difficulties from a local minister whom he called Parson Robert. Nevertheless, he asked Bishop Geddes to use his good offices with the Duke of Gordon and his factor, Mr. Tod, in getting permission for him to build on the Duke's lands and to raise money for the house.

In this undertaking Macdonell was quite successful for he had struck up a friendship with a "Mr. O. Macdonell, Galvie, a non-Catholic" who had given timber and a stance for the meeting-house. For his generosity to the Catholic priest, Mr. Macdonell incurred the wrath of Parson Robert and his followers who tried to dispossess him of that part of his farm.[29] Macdonell does not mention the construction or completion of this work and it is only through the Diary of Bishop Geddes who in recounting the details of his pastoral visit in 1790 mentions that "Mr. Alexander came from his chapel in Garviebeg".[30]

His mission in Badenoch was on a firm footing but it was to the west that Macdonell seemed drawn: the territory of Glengarry, Lochaber and the important Highland town of Fort William. Once the Badenoch chapel was assured of its completion, Macdonell began to initiate plans for one in Fort William. The timing was very unfortunate for the 1790's saw a decline in the economic capacity of the Highlanders. In 1790 he wrote that the people in Fort William had contributed £4 for their clergyman but that "Brae Lochaber was something more stubborn"[31] and in January 1791, he wrote that money for the chapel there was lacking and suggested that subscriptions be opened amongst the Edinburgh Highlanders and also amongst rich Catholics such as Donald MacDonald in Newcastle.[32]

Despite the drawbacks, Macdonell did not lose his enthusiasm and his plan to build "one of the best chapels in the Highlands" was talk of the area. Bishop Macdonald commented in one of his last letters before he died suddenly in September of 1791 :

> As I came through Lochaber the intended Fort William Chapel made a good deal of noise, but in the favourable way : at Capt. Alex [Macdonell or Macdonald] Keppoch's after dinner where there was a numerous Club of gentlemen besides the Marquis of Huntly and Mr. Tod, Success to the

> Catholic Chapel at Fort William was drunk in a bumper and Lady Chichester has already sent to Fort William her bill of £20 sterling as her contribution...[33]

Living accommodations were another matter. He had fully expected to live in the house of Sandy Macdonell in Garvabeg who had promised this in addition to gathering dues for him from his tenants. However he had to demur from the first part of the agreement because his wife had refused to "accept the troubles of churchman in her house".[34] His friend Mr. O. Macdonell in Galvie had offered his mother's house as a permanent dwelling, unfortunately without telling her. When she realized what he had done, she countermanded the offer for fear that she would be excommunicated by the Parson if she gave her house to a Catholic priest.[35]

Where he finally found a place in which to live is not known but his letters are dated in Garvamore in 1788 and 1790, Braelaggan. By January 1791 he had found lodgings to his liking in Dalchulie, which were spacious enough to accommodate his young cousin Simon Fraser, and Simon's cousin Peter, both of whom were students in the public school there.[36]

In several of his letters, Macdonell spoke of the influence that Parson Robert had over the whole area. In 1791 he mentioned being harrassed by Parson Fraser who

also bothered Mr. Angus, meaning his cousin Angus (Aeneas) Chisholm. Whether or not Parson Robert and Parson Fraser are the same is not certain but Macdonell seems to have suffered some discomfort from each(?) throughout his stay in the Highlands. It was only eleven years since the Gordon Riots in Glasgow, Edinburgh and other urban centres and there were still occasional outbreaks of hostility. Unlike the violence of the cities, what Macdonell encountered in the Highlands was of a petty nature and was similar to what other Catholic missionaries were experiencing.

His cousin, John Chisholm, who was at Fasnakyle and a clergyman of some experience having been ordained in 1777, had written to Bishop Geddes in 1789 about his confrontation with a Mr. Malcolm Nicolson. This gentleman had become irritated by the success of the Catholics, especially as it affected his own flock. On this occasion the conversion to Catholicism of one Sandy Fraser had caused Mr. Nicolson to write Mr. Fraser of Culbokie to prevent Mass-houses being constructed on his land, while others had made protestation to the Chief of Clan Chisholm. Upon hearing of this Lord Lovat spoke so harshly against the minister that he was accused of being a Papist.[37]

But, from the very first, Macdonell informed his correspondent in Edinburgh that although he was apprehensive of Parson Robert, he had nothing but praise for the "Protestant gentlemen" who had been so "exceeding kind to him".[38] It was a situation with which Macdonell should have been familiar keeping in mind that his mother's family were Presbyterian. Even in those days when it might be considered scandalous for a Catholic to attend non-Catholic liturgical services, he traveled on foot some twelve Scots miles to "assist at the burial of a cousin, Sandy Cameron of Clunes".[39]

The interrelationship between Catholic and Protestant presented a few problems for Catholics in maintaining the practice and discipline required by the Church. In one of his letters Macdonell reveals the awkwardness felt by some of his flock. He requested dispensations for those who were having problems keeping the dietary laws, especially during Lent. This was a period when houses were well-stocked with mutton and lamb, and Protestants, especially those who employed Catholic servants, could not understand why they refused to eat it. He had refused to bend on adherence to the Church maxim but was now seeking further advice from Bishop Geddes. Another problem arose when Catholics, who were forbidden,

wished to attend Protestant weddings. This was the cause of much bitterness for brothers, cousins and other near relatives could be involved. He posed yet a third problem, the keeping of holy days, in addition to Sundays. These were observed in much the same way as was Sunday in that attendance at Mass and abstinence from laborious work were required. This again proved a hardship for those employed in non-Catholic homes.

Macdonell in this letter shows some irritation because the Bishop had failed to respond to his earlier request for altar linens and books. "I cannot", he writes, "account for your conduct in this particular."

> To neglect I cannot attribute it; to want of zeal; to sense myself even if the mission were not concerned much less, for do what you will to me, I can never doubt your benevolence towards me.[40]

Some six weeks later, he still had not received a response to his inquiries but at least he had received altar linens although he would have preferred the vestments as he needed them more. But he is hardly able to contain his dismay at the seeming procrastination of Bishop Geddes.

> I am thoroughly convinced your time is employed very advantageously to the common good and therefore I fear my own importunities border both upon impertinence and injustice. Yet never can I slip an opportunity of informing you of my difficulties and testifying my confidence in you. You may get apologies enough for my conduct in this particular but you need never expect an amendment.[41]

Certainly the good Bishop did employ his time very advantageously. In fact at the very time Macdonell was informing him of his frustration and disappointment in receiving no answer to his request, Bishop Geddes was making plans for a pastoral visitation which would see him travel from Edinburgh to Orkney, some six hundred miles in less than eight weeks. On May 5, 1790, the day Macdonell wrote his chastising letter, Geddes was in Dunblane and Stirling. On May 24, he wrote to Macdonell apprising him of his intention to visit Badenoch and Lochaber in June.[42]

At last Mr. Macdonell would have a first hand opportunity to impress Bishop Geddes with the progress, the needs and vicissitudes of his mission, now almost three years old. If there were discussions, as there surely must have been, they have not been recorded or noted but Bishop Geddes has left an account of his journey.

As he entered the County of Inverness, his comments center more and more on descriptions of the natural surroundings :

> Walked on to the Inn of Garviemore and got a man to carry me through the Spey to Garviebeg...From Crief to this place almost the whole is hill and must make a hideous appearance to strangers. It is proper only for sheep and goats.[43]

This was Macdonell's mission territory and on June 20 Geddes noted that the missionary came from his Chapel to join him and others for dinner with the Macdonells in Garviebeg.[44] This was at least the second opportunity Macdonell had had to accompany a bishop through his mission and he seems to have delighted in showing his former teacher the dramatic beauty and awesome magnificence of the Central Highlands.

> Mr. Alexander and I rode up the west side of the Spey... the day clearing we saw on the left the hills towards Lochaber, the valley to Fort William, the pass towards Morar, that to Knoydart, to Glenelg, the hills of Glenmorison, Strathglass and some of those of Ross. We had a fine view of the plain where Fortaugustus lies and Lochness.[4]

On June 22 they left Fort Augustus and walked up [5] to Invergarry, passed some sights of historical or natural importance and finally came in view of Glengarry's modern house and the ruins of the old castle which had been burned in retaliation for the old chief's Jacobite sympathies. In order to reach the house on the bank of Loch Oich they had to cross the water by boat. Upon landing they encountered a recent victim of the Glengarry evictions, a man who was not a crofter but the head of a very important branch of Clan Glengarry, Alexander Macdonell of Greenfield, "who had lately been put out of his possession with his brother and son; was much affected

by the sight of them".[46] This was a fortuitous meeting for Greenfield emigrated with a number of the clan in 1792 and settled in the township of Charlottenburgh in Upper Canada. His brother-in-law Col. John Macdonell (Aberchalder) was the Speaker of the first House of Assembly being the member for Glengarry in Upper Canada.[47]. Both would welcome the young missionary standing beside Bishop Geddes to the Colony in another fourteen years.

After taking their leave, the two clergymen made their way to the Glengarry house where they were received and entertained by the widow of the late Chief, Duncan Macdonald, Marjory Grant of Dalvie and her children, the most notable of whom was the seventeen-year-old Chief, Alexander Ranaldson. Known to some as Light-headed Marjory, probably because of her hair colour rather than her lack of intelligence, she was a shrewd, calculating and at times, a ruthless woman who had no qualms in evicting her tenants. It seems almost axiomatic that Geddes closed his diary entries that day with the comment "this country now almost desolate.[48]

Macdonell must have looked forward to the next part of the journey very much for it was to take them to the home of William Fraser of Culbokie, in Guisachan, Strathglass. This was an opportunity for Macdonell to

renew acquaintances with his cousins, very few of whom were there. Three of the sons were in Grenada, Anna had married into the Scotos family and Simon was at school in Perthshire.

The farms in Strathglass were managed by the Chisholm and it pleased Bishop Geddes to note that the tenants there had got"eighteen years of their leases which preserves it from becoming a sheep-walk".[49] Unfortunately fate would interfere with this arrangement for "William Chisholm, the sickly, money-hungry chief" inherited the title from his half-brother and in 1793, he married Elizabeth Macdonell, the sister of Glengarry. With her encouragement he set about revoking the leases in order to turn more and more land over to the Lowland sheep farmer, Thomas Gillespie.[50]

But, for the present, matters seemed to be well-in-hand. The Bishop recommenced his journey towards the north and Macdonell after accompanying his superior for a few hours, turned back towards his own mission.

On his return trip Macdonell would be able to take in the desolate countryside. No doubt it disturbed him greatly for he himself had been touched directly by the exodus. His brother Allan and sister Margaret were both in Canada and there were at least two brothers in the West Indies.

And yet, recruiting for emigration was still going on. The same month which saw Bishop Geddes and Alexander Macdonell surveying the Highland landscape, an agent from Canada was taking subscriptions for passage to Montreal. This was Miles Macdonell of the Scothouse family.[51] He had emigrated with his father John Macdonell, Spanish John, aboard the Pearl in 1773 and was now very active in the establishment of the British Colonies. Towards the end of June, 1790, he had a group of 87 from North Morar, Arisaig, Glengarry and Eigg each adult of whom paid £3 for his passage aboard the British Queen.[52]

An even more devastating emigration was to take place a year later. Some 1300 set sail for Pictou in Nova Scotia and another 400 to 500 left the Isle of Skye for North Carolina.[53] Most of these were Macdonells or Macdonalds and nearly all were paying passengers. Clearly these emigrants preferred to leave the uncertainty of the Highlands for a chance at security in a new land despite the hardships involved therein.

In addition to their Catholic populations disappearing, the Church had another problem and that was the exodus of clergy who went with the various groups. By 1786 Roderic Macdonell[54] and Alexander Macdonell (Scotos) had established themselves in the communities

along the St. Lawrence and there were other missionaries from the Highlands working in the settlements in Cape Breton and St. John's Island. What a shock it must have been for Alexander Macdonell to learn that his fellow ordinand from Valladolid, Angus MacEacharn had applied for and was granted leave to accompany a group of emigrants from Uist to settle in St. John's Island in 1790.

In the autumn of that year Macdonell in a letter to Geddes mentions something which seems almost an afterthought but was to imbed itself on his consciousness for another three years:

> the Marquis of Huntly and others are recruiting officers in the district.[55]

By 1791, Macdonell had established himself fairly well. He had found better lodgings in Dalchulie and staying with him were his young cousin Simon Fraser, Culbokie's son who had been a student in Muthill and Simon's cousin, Peter, both of whom were now attending school there. In writing to his sister in March 1791, Simon remarked that they lived "very comfortably and that the gentlemen were all exceedingly friendly" to them. He goes on to say that these same "gentlemen of Badenoch were as fine as any in the Kingdom".[56]

Macdonell's relationships with the gentlemen of

the district seem to have been well-established also. He was a handsome, well-educated and engaging young clergyman and his company was not spurned. Like Bishop Geddes, but to a lesser degree, he liked to socialize, and to keep the company of important people. Unlike Bishop Geddes who had a genuine regard for his friends and acquaintances Macdonell exhibited a tendency to cultivate relationships with those who could be of use to him and often he was bitterly disappointed as a consequence. One of the few documented instances of his keeping company of the better sort can be elicited from his request to Bishop Geddes to have the following inserted in the Edinburgh Advertiser :

> Wednesday the 2nd instant being the birthday of the Marquis of Huntly and on which he and a major number of the gentlemen of this Breas [sic] met at Garvamore among whom were Allan McDonell of Galvie, Alex^{r} McDonell, Strathmasie, Capt. McPherson, Blaragie, Mr. McDonnell, Garva Beg, Mr. McPherson, Shirro, Mr. Eason at Dalchulie and Mr. McDonell at Dalchulie with their families and several of their followers...Both gentlemen and commoners seemed to vie with one another in their protestations of regard and attachment to their young Lord.[57]

He also kept up a correspondence with his cousins in Strathglass, especially Margaret (Peggy) and Mary Fraser in Guisachan. Anna, their sister, had married Aeneas Macdonell on November 11, 1788 and it was expected she would become the Lady of Scothouse when her husband

succeeded his father Ranald, 5th of Scotos. Unfortunately this was not to be so for he predeceased his father on December 9, 1792, leaving his widow a heavy burden of debt.[58]

Despite his relative youth the ardous life of the ministry in the Highlands was beginning to take its toll on Macdonell's health. Of the few remarks which survive from his student days is one concerning his constitution: "Sandy is not strong".[59] In February and October of 1790 he wrote to Bishop Geddes concerning his poor health, especially stomach problems and exhaustion from the extensive traveling he had to do in order to attend to his missions in Badenoch and Lochaber, a distance of thirty Scots miles. Following their trip through the Highlands Macdonell wrote to Geddes to compliment the fifty-six year old, slightly-built bishop on his superior ability to manage the tortuous hills and dales.[60] About two months later, again feeling the effects of his travels he wrote somewhat amusingly : Indeed Sir, if you could see

> with what difficulty I trail my long legs to and from it[the chapel from his lodgings] and the gastly[sic] figure my untwisted carcass makes every Sundy[sic]evening, you would not think I have much reason to be vain.[61]

Yet, it was the norm rather than the exception to suffer the effects of the Badenoch mission. The weather,

especially the wind and winter snow, the precipitous cliffs and towering peaks took their toll on all and few missionaries survived a residence longer than five years.[62]

An example of the kind of danger which beset the area is the incident which was reported by Father Donald Forbes on December 27, 1819. He and a party of four men and a pony had set out to cross Corryarrick. As they progressed up the heights, they were struck by a severe winter storm, became completely confused and lost the road. It was only by trusting to the instincts of the pony that they, following its lead, were able to survive the journey.[63]

Relief from this mission, however, was not long away for as fate would have it, Macdonell had to help out in Edinburgh and Glasgow for a brief period in the autumn of 1791, and while there became very much involved with the Highlanders who were now crowding into the mills and factories of the cities.

A series of coincidences saw Bishop Hay alone to take care of the two Vicariates, the parishes of St. Andrews and St. Margarets in Edinburgh and to keep an eye on developments in Glasgow. Bishop Alexander Macdonald from the Highland Vicariate had died in September, Bishop

Geddes as arranged at their annual meeting in August, had set out for France and the two missionaries responsible for the Edinburgh parishes were both very ill.

On October 26, the very day Geddes set out for France, Bishop Hay was in Glasgow and noted that if "a prudent missionary could be settled there, he anticipated that much good might be done". He found the Catholics there prepared to contribute to the support of a priest among them and presented them with a plan to raise a subscription for such.[64] It was on this day also that Mr. Menzies, the missionary responsible for the chapel of St. Andrews in Edinburgh, died. One of his assets was his ability to speak with them in Gaelic and his death meant that the hundreds of Gaelic-speaking Highlanders would be unattended, until he could be replaced.

Macdonell was in Edinburgh, probably from the latter part of November, and while there served the St. Andrews population. In a letter from Bishop Geddes who was in Douai he mentions Macdonell's presence :

> I suppose Mr. Alexr. from Badenoch will have left you before now. I wish him well wherever he be.[65]

Indeed, it was more than a fleeting visit for while he was there, he was able to accomplish several important tasks. One of these concerned the Edinburgh Highlanders with whom Macdonell communicated so easily, as

Bishop Hay reported :

> While here Mr. Alexr. was very assiduous with his country people in this place, found great numbers that had not been at their duties for years and some who had gone off entirely and gave it as his opinion that if they did not get one of their own country who could preach and instruct them in their own language, many of those at present and the rising generation would all be lost.[66]

The main reason for his being away from Badenoch seems to have been that of bringing to fruition the plan which had been suggested by Bishop Hay and the Glasgow manufacturers, especially David Dale, namely that of settling Highlanders in the Glasgow area to work in the mills. In this, Mr. Macdonell was more than a mere messenger for he seems to have been responsible for actively soliciting the manufacturers on behalf of his beleaguered kinsmen and of exacting from them promises to maintain their well-being.[67]

It was only a matter of weeks before Bishop Hay was able to write his colleague in France that the newly appointed Vicar-apostolic to the Highland District, John Chisholm and he had deliberated for some time and had agreed that Mr. Macdonell was the "fittest man to be settled" in Glasgow to "finish the work he had so happily begun."[68]

Macdonell had been in the Highlands from November 1787 until November 1791, four years. He had established

a mission with a chapel in Badenoch and was responsible for initiating plans for another in Fort William. He did not cut ties with the Highlands for he kept in touch with his cousins the Frasers and maintained contact, even if somewhat deferential with the House of Glengarry. Even as late as 1793, he was trying to raise subscription money for the Fort William Chapel. It was a very distressing year "in the Highlands and could hardly scrape a farthing..." His friend Col. Cameron gave him "ten guineas and some of his officers six - that was all ... but the chapel is progressing... and will be the best in the Highlands".[69]

What reaction there was to Macdonell's removal to Glasgow has not survived save for the remark quoted from a letter from John Chisholm to George Hay in Edinburgh:

> Since I came to the Highlands none signified their approbation of Mr. Alexr.'s being settled at Glasgow and some regretted it...[70]

But rather than consider Macdonell as leaving the Highlands, it would seem that he took part of the Highlands with him to Glasgow. That the residents, especially the Catholics should regret his departure was only natural but their disappointment and chagrin was only another such expression from a people who daily dealt with rumors of and actual departures of kin and friend.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER TWO

1. M. Gray, "Economic Welfare and Money Income," p.55.

2. J. Lettice, Letters on a Tour Through the Various Parts of Scotland in the Year 1792, p.280-284, passim.

3. D. Stewart, Sketches of the Character, Manners and Present State of the Highlands of Scotland...,p.122-23.

4. T.C. Smout, A History of the Scottish People, 1560-1830, p.353.

5. Scotochronicon, p.136.

6. Ibid., p.81-82.

7. J. Bumsted, The People's Clearance, 1750-1815, p.58.

8. N. Macdonald, The Clan Ronald of Knoydart and Glengarry, p.128.

9. J. Cameron Lees, A History of the County of Inverness, p.249, Scotochronicon, p.127, et al.

10. Alexander Macdonell of the Scotos family went to Rome in 1759 and returned an ordained priest in 1767. He was for a time a domestic chaplain at Scothouse and a missionary in Knoydart. Innes Review 17, p.148. After Bishop John Macdonald died in 1779, he narrowly missed being selected to replace him, the vote of the missionaries being tied at six for each candidate. Propaganda on the advice of Bishop Hay decided to appoint Alexander Macdonald (d. 1791). Scotochronicon, p.177 & 263.

11. Bumsted, p.67.

12. Scotochronicon, p.288.

13. R.H. Campbell and J.B.A. Dow, Source Book of Scottish Economic and Social History, p.52.

14. Isabella Macdonell to John Geddes 27 March 1788, SCA, Blairs.

15. Geddes to Hay, 26 September 1787, SCA, Blairs.

16. Geddes to Thomson, 11 October 1787, SCA, BLairs

17. Macdonell to Geddes, 14 April 1788, SCA, Blairs

18. The Bill to relieve Scottish Roman Catholics from certain penalties and disabilities brought against them by former Acts of the Scottish Parliament, especially in the 8th and 9th Sessions of the First Parliament of King William was first read on April 25, 1793 and received Royal Assent on June 3, 1793. Scotochronicon, p.343.

19. Macdonell to Geddes, 14 April 1788, SCA, Blairs

20. Idem.

21. O. Blundell. The Catholic Highlands of Scotland, vol.1,p.122.

22. I.F. Grant, Everday Life on an Old Highland Farm, p.29-33, passim.

23. M.I. Adam, "Causes of the Highland Emigration, 1783-1803", p.77.

24. I.F. Grant, p.35-37, passim.

25. C. Fraser-Mackintosh, "The Depopulation of Aberarder in Badenoch in 1770," p.420.

26. Macdonell to Geddes, 8 December 1788, SCA, Blairs

27. Macdonell to Geddes, 8 November 1788, SCA, Blairs

28. N.H. Macdonald, The Clan Ronald of Knoydart and Glengarry, p.132.

29. Macdonell to Geddes, 8 November 1788, SCA, Blairs

30. D. McRoberts, "Ambula Coram Deo...," p.137.

31. Macdonell to Geddes, 8 February 1790., SCA, Blairs.

32. Macdonell to Geddes, 7 January 1790, SCA, Blairs.

33. Alexander Macdonald to Geddes, 5 September 1791, SCA, Blairs. Lady Chichester was probably the wife of Chichester Macdonell, the son of Alexander Macdonell (Aberchalder). Both father and son had emigrated aboard the Pearl in 1773. Chichester had served in the Revolutionary War as 2d Lieutenant in Butler's Rangers for six years and commanded the 82d Regiment of Foot and saw service at the Battle of Corunna for which he received a gold medal. He died while on service in India. Vide A. Macdonell. A Sketch of the Life of the Hon. and Rt. Rev. Alexander Macdonell, p.76.

34. Macdonell to Geddes, 8 November 1788, SCA, Blairs.

35. Idem.

36. Macdonell to Geddes, 7 January 1791, SCA, Blairs.

37. John Chisholm to Geddes, 24 May 1789 and 6 July 1789, SCA, Blairs.

38. Macdonell to Geddes, 14 April 1788, SCA, Blairs.

39. Macdonell to Geddes, 8 December 1788, SCA, Blairs.

40. Macdonell to Geddes, 22 March 1790, SCA, Blairs.

41. Macdonell to Geddes, 4 May 1790, SCA, Blairs.

42. D. McRoberts, p.65.

43. Ibid., p.137.

44. Idem.

45. Idem.

46. Ibid., p.138.

47. J.A. Macdonell, Sketches illustrating the Early Settlement and History of Glengarry in Canada, p.131-2.

48. McRoberts, p.138.

49. Idem.

50. John Prebble, Mutiny, p.293.

51. Miles Macdonell was the great-grandson of Aeneas III of Scotos and the son of John Macdonell (Spanish John). He later became Governor of Assiniboia in Lord Selkirk's Company. Vide C. Fraser-Mackintosh, "The Macdonells of Scotos", p.82 and J.A. Macdonell, A Sketch of the Life..., p.76-77.

52. Bumsted, p.74.

53. Ibid., p.74-76, passim.

54. Roderic Macdonell applied to emigrate in 1783, giving as one reason that his parents and whole family had gone to America. Vide Bp. Alexander Macdonald to Bishop Hay, 1 December 1783, SCA, Blairs.

55. Macdonell to Geddes, 1 November 1790, SCA, Blairs.

56. Simon Fraser to Peggy Fraser, 5 March 1791, SCA, Preshome.

57. Macdonell to Geddes, 5 February 1791, SCA, Blairs

58. C. Fraser-Mackintosh, "The Macdonells of Scotos," p.92.

59. Cameron to Geddes, 12 July 1782, SCA, Blairs.

60. Macdonell to Geddes, 29 October 1790, SCA, Blairs.

61. Macdonell to Geddes, 7 January 1791, SCA, Blairs.

62. Blundell, p.130.

63. Idem.

64. Scotochronicon, p. 321.

65. Geddes to Hay, 16 December 1791, SCA, Blairs.

66. Hay to Geddes, 22 May 1792, SCA, Blairs.

67. Alexander Macdonell, A Short Account of the Emigration from the Highlands of Scotland to North America..., p.4.

68. Hay to Geddes, 21 February 1792, SCA, Blairs.

69. Macdonell to Hay, 26 November 1793, SCA, Blairs.

70. Hay to Geddes, 22 May 1792, SCA, Blairs.

Fig. 1. A view of Glasgow from the South-West, 1764.

Fig. 2. View of the Trongate, Glasgow, 1770-1771.

Prints from the Foules Academy of Art. Photographed by the Mitchell Library, Glasgow.

III

THE MILL - GLASGOW

To those Highlanders made desperate by the periodic famines, the ordinary poverty and most of all, the clearances by the landowners three options were available: migration to an industrial location, preferably in their native Scotland, to join a regiment for service in war or colonial venture and last, and in their minds, worst of all to leave their homeland to settle in the New World. When movement towards an industrial area was chosen, no other center showed greater attraction to the Highlander than Glasgow. It was near enough to the north-west and western isles to permit when possible, periodic visits to those left behind and in itself, was gradually assuming in some of its "ghettoes" a Gaelic-speaking character. Furthermore, the landless labourers were desperately wanted by the manufacturers whose economic expansion knew as yet no bounds.

Glasgow in the eighteenth century was one of the most beautiful cities in Britain. James Denholm commented that in 1797 the external appearances of the city with its

handsome squares and broad streets reflected the good taste and wealth of its citizens.[1]

> At the Cross where is discernible all that hustle and bustle...from this point indeed the prospect has an air of great magnificence. To the west as far as the eye can reach appear the broad and elegant streets of the Tron-gate and Argyle Street adorned throughout with handsome houses, and for a certain length on both sides supported by pillars of the Doric order, covering piazzas for the shelter of the inhabitants.[2]

The progress of the city was carefully planned and monitored. In 1784 the site of the new town was chosen and there were projects to raise the water levels in order to bring an adequate supply to the citizens. In the south of the city was the Green, a type of park, which extended for three-quarters of a mile on the north bank of the Clyde. It was completely enclosed and surrounded by trees and contained areas for recreation as well as a public wash house and bleachfields. Cattle were permitted to graze there and the cavalry to exercise their horses.[3] To provide for the safety of the citizens at night its streets were illuminated by some eight hundred lamps.[4]

The population in the last quarter of the eighteenth century was rising due to the influx of labourers, mostly from rural areas, both Highland and Lowland, and numerous Irish, but it was then within a manageable degree. In 1785 and 1791 the population was 45,889 and 66,578, respectively. After 1800, the

statistics show an incredible increase so that by 1811, there were 110,460 counted, a jump of 140% in twenty-six years.[5] But, in the period concerned, 1785-1795, Glasgow was seen still to be a good place to live.

Its climate and air, yet free from the stench and disease of over-crowding was conducive to well-being. In 1798 Denholm remarked that "no place of the same size in Britain could boast of as many old persons or as confined a list of diseases".[6] Most of those affected with disease did come from the labouring class but in the decade 1785-95, there were few deaths from fever although there was a significant number of small-pox cases, mostly children and mostly within the Highland families. The introduction of vaccine would see a drop in this statistic during the last decade of the century and treatment and medical aid was more readily available because of the opening of the Royal Infirmary in December 1794.[7]

Glasgow had always been a port city, relatively quiet in the seventeenth century but was looming ever more vital with the establishment of western trade routes to the Americas. The most important commodities which nourished the seventeenth and eighteenth-century industrialization were sugar and tobacco. Both were processed in Glasgow at this time but the employment of

labourers was not greatly increased because of them. The new source of wealth was the introduction of cotton mills, the most important of which were those established by David Dale. In 1786 he had founded his first, and by 1793 he had four in New Lanark alone which employed 1334 men, women and children.[8]

The mills required skilled spinners, weavers and dyers whose abilities commanded relatively high wages, but, by far the greatest need was for labourers. The nature of the mill, its drudgery and the long hours demanded seemed to many like a work-house, and so prejudiced them against employment there. But, the void was quickly filled by the disenfranchised poor from Scotland and Ireland. Women between the ages of 15 and 24 and children were sought especially to work in the factories and bleachfields as labourers or as domestic servants.[9] In fact, a 1786 census of the workers in David Dale's Lanark mill showed that of 795 boys and girls employed, 523 were under fourteen years of age. They worked from six in the morning until seven in the evening with an hour-and-a-half rest during the day. After, their work finished, they were expected to attend school until nine each night.[10] To illustrate the extent to which the industry mushroomed, it was estimated that in 1791

there were about 15000 looms in Dale's Lanark mills and that each loom gave employment to nine persons on average in the various stages of manufacture, in all, about 135,000 persons.[11]

In 1791 David Dale made it known in the Highlands and the Isles that "he was prepared to build houses for all newcomers" and indeed by 1793 some 200 houses had been built in New Lanark.[12] But, Glasgow itself was a different matter. Despite the good intentions of the planners it was taking on in some of its districts, the embryonic stages of what it was to be only fifty years into the future. The influx of population which would produce in Victorian times some of the "worst slums in the world,"[13] seems to have concentrated in a location bounded on the east by the Saltmarket, on the west by Stockwell Street, on the north by the Tron-gate and on the south by the river - the very area which housed the first Catholic meeting-houses. Yet, even in 1798, Denholm described the Saltmarket with its houses supported by arcades and the other streets branching off, containing "a set of elegant modern buildings, scarcely to be equalled anywhere in the city."[14] To the visitor, it must have seemed a promising site for a group of dispossessed, homeless and desperate people.

Since most of the Highland emigrants were Catholic the Church was asked to aid in the recruitment of labourers for the Glasgow/Lanark mills. Yet, there was a drawback to the Church's involvement, and it was undoubtedly the hostility shown towards Catholics. The anti-Papist sentiment nurtured in the early days of the Reformation and brought to full maturity in the campaigns of the Covenanters and finally the Whiggamore ascendancy had somewhat subsided in the early part of the eighteenth century. There had been sporadic outbreaks of violence, mostly by hooligan mobs, during which a meeting-house might be sacked, its congregation attacked, or individuals might be harrassed in the streets. But there were several serious outbreaks during the three decades after the defeat of the Stuart cause at Culloden which made people like Bishop Hay very uneasy. In fact, most of his life he tried to live his Catholicism as discreetly as was possible. When the chapel at Stobhall was set on fire August 18-19, 1788, he commented that it was a "demonstration that the spark is still alive and how cautious we ought to be, not to take any step that might excite it". On this occasion, he spoke to the resolution forbidding the singing of hymns during public worship.[15]

Further, occasionally, the Penal Laws affected individuals such as those who inherited estates, and possibly disenfranchised through the malice of a Protestant relative or groups of Catholics, such as those soldiers returning to the Highlands after service in the Seven Years War who were deprived of their pensions because of the intervention of the Kirk ministers in their native parishes.[16] However, the service of Catholics to the Government during the Seven Years War with France (1756-1763), the continued threat from that country and the outbreak of trouble with the American Colonies gave rise to a serious consideration of rescinding the penal laws against Catholics. One of these concerned the Attestation Oath in which the recruit declared he was a Protestant. It was deemed its removal would more readily attract Catholics for military service.

In the spring of 1778 preparations were made to present a Bill to the British Parliament for the relief of English Catholics from the Act of Parliament passed in the 11th and 12th Year, William III, which chiefly affected the property of Catholics and the prosecution of their clergy. It was hoped a similar Act would be passed for Scotland. The English Relief Bill received Royal Assent on June 3, 1778. In Scotland the reverse occurred.[17]

Despite the intervention of a moderate party within the Kirk led by the then Moderator, Dr. William Robertson, who was also Principal of Glasgow University, and after a series of anti-Catholic synods, the Synod of Glasgow passed its resolution against Popery on October 13, and the mob took over. They went to the home in the High Street of a Highlander named Donald Macdonald, a combmaker, where the small group of Catholics worshipped and began to pelt the congregation with stones, to desecrate the chapel and vandalize the premises. Outside those who could be identified as Catholics were physically abused. There was no opposition, neither from law officers nor from their fellow-citizens.[18]

In Edinburgh, Bishop Hay himself was a victim. The new Chapel-house in Chalmer's Close was completely wrecked and burnt to the ground. He himself had just arrived from London in time to witness the mob before his house, and after asking an old woman the cause, received the rather unnerving reply : "Oh, sir, we are burning the Popish Chapel and we only wish we had the Bishop to throw into the fire."[19] The rioting had its effect and the Bill for the Relief of Catholics in Scotland was dropped.[20]

Yet, despite the threats and outbursts of violence, a small Catholic community survived in Glasgow.

From the correspondence between Bishop Geddes and some of the Glasgow Catholics, especially Anne Fletcher, one can envisage its size, spirit and social composition.

Nearly all commentaries about the Glasgow Mission in the latter half of the eighteenth century mention the Misses Fletcher, two sisters belonging to the family of Dunans, in whose residence the small community gathered for service, either prayers conducted by the congregation or Sunday service held occasionally by a visiting priest or by Bishop Geddes himself while he resided in neighbouring Edinburgh. These ladies whom Bishop Geddes rightfully lauded in later years as the soul of the Glasgow Mission did all they could to see that the small society survived despite the rather nasty events.[21]

A decade after the Glasgow riots, Anne wrote to Bishop Geddes to tell him of the most recent incident during which she and the community were harrassed for being papists and how they turned away a mob carrying sticks by telling them that the house was filled with armed gentlemen.[22] But, the little community which varied from between 25 and 50 who attended services, was beginning to expand, as was the city itself. In 1783 a kinsman of Bishop Geddes, Dr. Alexander Geddes, volunteered to tend the flock while he was working on some Hebrew Ms. at the College. By 1785 he noted to the Bishop

that the flock was expanding and included a goodly number of exhuberant and unrestrained Irish, much to his dismay, for he feared their indiscreet behaviour would attract the attention of the anti-Catholic faction.[23] Bishop Geddes remarked the growing congregation in his letter to Mr. Reid in February, 1787, noting he had seventy in attendance.[24]

The population in and about 1782 was not made up mostly of labourers and operatives as Senex stated in his history of Glasgow in 1884,[25] but included some rather interesting persons. There were the Fletchers, the two sisters whose flat was probably the "first storey of a back tenement at the foot of a long close opposite the Bridgegate bounded on the east by the Molendinar Burn..." which served as the meeting-house.[26] Occasionally their brother John, the future Laird of Dunans visited the city and stood by to help the fledgling congregation. The family itself is reported to have converted[27] but at this time seems to have been well-established as Catholic with one sister, Clare Frances Fletcher, a member of a religious order in Dunkirk and a brother Andrew, seemingly a spendthrift adventurer, under the watchful eye of the Scots College in Spain. He was to provide relief for both family and guardians by joining a troop of horse in a Spanish Regiment in 1785.[28]

There were also the Bonnets (Bonettes) a couple who had founded a well-respected dancing school in Glasgow. She had been introduced to Bishop Hay about 1773 through the efforts of the Abate Grant, the Scottish Mission agent in Rome. He had requested the good bishop to keep an eye on her for the sake of her father who was a respectable citizen of Bologna. Miss Marcucci had moved to London, and later to Edinburgh, where she was a very successful dancer. Shortly afterwards she had met a French emigré named Bonnet, married and moved to Glasgow.[29] Throughout his correspondence whenever he mentioned her, Bishop Hay referred to Mrs. Bonnet as "this most excellent woman".[30]

Probably the best known because of his connection with the Glasgow business community was Pierre-Jacques Papillon, a Frenchman, who had been brought to Glasgow in 1783 by David Dale. He is credited with introducing into Scotland the turkey-red dyeing process. Bishop Geddes was very impressed by M. Papillon and was aware of his potential service not only to the small Catholic group but to the larger Glasgow community for he remarked his investing a good deal of money in Dale's factory.[31]

In October 1787 Bishop Geddes was in Glasgow and was approached by a number of Catholics, among whom was M. Papillon, who made known their desires to have a

missionary settled there. They promised to raise a stipend of £20 per year themselves, in order to secure the missionary's services.[32] Two months later seven of the principal householders decided to institute a little society and to initiate a fund from voluntary subscriptions. Two stewards were elected to monitor the fund and it was decided to rent a house for meeting on Sunday, for prayers and special readings. This house was also to be the residence for the missionary if and when he were appointed. "How desirable it is," wrote the Bishop, "that we have a clever, zealous, pious, exemplary missionary here".[33]

By June of 1788 things had been arranged in Glasgow. A house had been rented to them by Mr. John Wilson, who would be Town Clerk in 1791 and who had a muslin business addressed in the Saltmarket above number 15.[34] A couple had been engaged to live in the "kitchen" and it was hoped that visiting clergymen would appear to the curious as lodgers. Items such as a chest of drawers which would serve as an altar, a table, some chairs and other small items were purchased from their fund and they planned to have a bed before the temporarily assigned missionary, Mr. Alexander Macdonald, from Drummond Castle, should arrive to visit the Highlanders in Glasgow.[35] The arrangements seem to have worked well.

Mr. Macdonald paid his visits when he could and Bishop Geddes maintained a close contact with the community.

But the group kept up its solicitation to have a missionary settled amongst them permanently. In this they were supported by Bishop Geddes who intensified his efforts to convince Bishop Hay to provide one from those available as soon as possible. This was not an easy task. As in Edinburgh, the numbers of Gaelic-speaking residents was increasing in Glasgow and this meant that the charge of the new mission would have to be given to one of the missionaries from the Highland District, an area already short of clergymen.

Finally, the impetus to appoint a resident missionary came from six of the principal Glasgow manufacturers whose desire to acquire the needed labourers led them to make some rather interesting promises. They told Bishop Geddes, privately, that they would pay to support a Catholic priest in order to correct the opinion that they were bigotted.[36] Mr. Wilson, the town clerk and owner of the meeting-hall leased for the community services had mentioned to the Bishop that prejudice against Catholics had subsided during the past several years so that he expected animosity would be shown neither towards the Catholic Highlanders nor their mission in Glasgow.[37] It is amusing in this context to note that Macdonell,

in later years, made reference to the advice of Dr. Porteous, a Presbyterian minister who seemingly did not concur with this analysis, that he open his chapel to the street and not close the door during service, and that he conduct the Mass early in the morning before the roughs who had spent the previous evening in a tavern were up.[38]

In his letter to the Scottish agent in Rome, Bishop Hay described the sequence of events as follows:

> A door is likely to open for them [the poorer sort] at Glasgow. Manufacturers there are advancing to such a degree that they cannot get hands to supply. Application has been made to us to supply them from the Highlands, our only objection [being] the want of exercise of their religion...They...are actually concerting at present to obviate that difficulty by providing a Chapel; and have begun subscriptions among themselves to execute their plan and provide for a Churchman...If this takes place and the emigrations continue for a few years, we shall have few of our people either in the great estates of Clanranald or Glengarry.[39]

Coincidence led to Macdonell's role in the formation of the Glasgow mission. He was in Edinburgh to assist Bishop Hay especially with the Highland emigrants there during the months of January and February, 1792. He was sent to Glasgow to secure the best possible conditions for those Highlanders who would accept to work for the mill owners, for, despite the wretched conditions which they were experiencing on the estates, they needed to be enticed to leave their homes for what was really a foreign

milieu. The owners looked to the church to provide some of the tradition they would have had to relinquish in Glasgow, emphasizing the practice of their religion as ministered by one who spoke their own tongue.

Although Macdonell did not refer much to his activities, Bishop Hay detailed some of his accomplishments in a letter to Bishop Geddes.

> He went to see our friends at Glasgow and found great numbers around Levin Water...went to see Mr. Dale, told him who he was and said he would concur with his ideas if religion could be accommodated, ...next to Professor Anderson and was introduced by him to others who want workers... Mr. Alex. has shown a great deal of prudence and zeal in this affair and both Mr. [John] Chisholm and I are of the opinion that he is the fittest hand to be settled there and finish the work he has so happily begun.[40]

Time for a transition period from the apparent life of a Highland gentleman to that of an urban parson was not really available to Macdonell. His first activity before taking up residence in Glasgow seems to have been the fulfillment of a promise to Lady Chichester [Macdonell] to escort her two cousins to a school in Liège. This, though perhaps unusual, was not so unwise for the Low Countries were as dangerous for the traveler as was France itself, torn as it was by uprisings and their aftermath. He was able to recount of just such an event, one which held a special interest for Scots, to Bishop Geddes, whom he met in Douai.

> On Sunday last he and his companion were at Tournay when a body of French from Lille advanced thither, but the Austrians met them and beat them back with considerable loss. The fugitives on their return to Lille assassinated Dillon their commander and the only officer of Dillon's Regiment who had not gone over to the Prince.[41]

Macdonell seems to have taken his time while traveling on the Continent, although he noted delays caused by poor winds, etc.,[42] and he lingered in the south long enough to visit Bishop Geddes who was by then in London, and several members of the Glengarry family who were in Oxford. This was rather characteristic of Macdonell. He liked to travel and to make contact with the "right" people wherever he went. One might consider his procrastination in returning to Glasgow as negligence of duty, and unfortunately, not many years would pass before this charge, in another context, would be levelled against him. However, he finally heeded Bishop Hay's insistent summons that he hasten to Glasgow and arrived there in July, 1792,[43] to commence his pastoral duties to a congregation which Bishop Hay described as "in high spirits" and supported by patrons who expressed the greatest regard for him.[44].

Macdonell stayed in Glasgow for about a month during which time he made a very favourable impression.

> Mr Macdonell has been hitherto very successful at Glasgow - they have taken from the Duke of Hamilton and the Provost for the publickly avowed purpose of being a Catholic chapel, a large hall in which the manufacturers are placing 300 seats in his absence in the Highlands and they are a surety for a rent of no less than £40. Prudence is no doubt very necessary: but our confidence must be in God.[45]

For some reason, perhaps an illness in the Culbokie family, he left Glasgow for the Highlands at the end of August. It was not until the third week of October that he returned and on October 21, 1792,[46] to officiate for the first time in the New Chapel which the congregation and officials had put in place during his absence. No sooner had he settled into Glasgow than he began plans to expand the mission and to provide larger and better quarters for the congregation and himself. Considering the handicap under which the fledgling community had laboured and the quasi-charitable condition of their existence, this was a rather bold step. Bishop Hay was somewhat alarmed and commented to Bishop Geddes that he was:

> much afraid that he had a little touch of the common turn too prevalent amongst us; yet considering the difficulties he must be exposed to in setting up the house in such a place, and in such circumstances, he was willing that he get the town quota for a little [while][47]

Macdonell does not seem to have been daunted by the misgivings of the bishops and for the next twelve

months was content with building his domain and ingratiating himself with the Glasgow community. Discretion and caution never seem to have played a very important role in Macdonell's decisions and plans. As Bishop Hay shrewdly noted:

> He is of a forward, intrepid disposition, but I have often seen when Providence has a mind to bring about any event, he qualifies the instruments he makes use of for that purpose and very often a certain degree of boldness produces much better effect than too much timidity; I trust God that will be the case with our friend there.[48]

As the new year 1793 neared, Britain found itself enmeshed in the turmoil caused by the French Revolution. In December, 1792, Bishop Geddes had been asked by Lord Adam Gordon, the Commander-in-Chief for North Britain, to exhort his congregation to disprove of "seditious sentiments and proceedings".[49] He in turn requested Bishop Hay to require that all their pulpits be used to warn the people that nothing could be:

> more pernicious than to disturb a government by exciting the people to diffidence and discontent, as well appears from the calamities of a neighbouring country".[50]

There can be little doubt that Macdonell would comply wholeheartedly with this request but a worse effect of the calamities was soon to disrupt all his plans, both for himself and the hundreds of Highlanders he had induced to come to Glasgow.

On January 21, 1793, King Louis XVI was beheaded and eleven days later, February 1, France declared war on England and Holland. The hostilites with France led to a blockading of the trade routes, especially those towards North America, thus bringing about a stagnation in the commerce of Glasgow. One by one the mills closed down and many of the workers whom Macdonell had so recently brought to Glasgow were once again penniless. He himself described as having seen:

> upward of six hundred Catholics, men, women and children from various parts of the Highlands spread over the whole face of this country in quest of a scanty subsistence and all of them doomed to this hard fate by the cruel avarice of this inhuman oppression. A recital of the sufferings of these miserable people since the fatal stagnation took place in trade would rake up your very soul. I have at this very instant a list of scores of them unable to get labour and destitute of every necessity of life - at the next stage to starvation inspite of what I can do for them myself or procure from others. Some of them tell me they pass whole days without nourishment.[51]

In the autumn of 1793, Macdonell left Glasgow once again, this time to assist his cousin Culbokie who was dying and "whose estate had not been settled ...and [who]... would not let him leave until it had been arranged to his satisfaction."[52] He took the opportunity of his visit to the Highlands to renew acquaintances with his cousin and superior, Bishop John

Chisholm, the young Chief of Glengarry, Alexander Ranaldson Macdonell and Colonel Cameron of Erracht, with whom he resided in Fort William. He did not return until November when he again took up his duties amongst the people. He was appalled at the misery, noting especially the Irish, for "many of that godly nation were pining away on the bed of sorrow ...and miserable objects" they were.[53]

He went on with his plans without opposition from anyone, it was learned later to the chagrin of the hierarchy, until February of 1794. It was then he informed Bishop Hay of "Glengarry's" plan to form a Catholic Regiment, but neglected to advise his superior of his own involvement. After the meeting at Fort Augustus on February 26, 1794, the Regiment became uppermost in his attention and at best, his dealings with the Glasgow Mission were as occasional visits. On March 3, 1794, he and Glengarry left to present their plan to the officials in London. During his absence, Bishop Hay and the missionary appointed to replace Macdonell, Mr. John Farquharson, learned to their dismay, that there was friction between the parishoners and their pastor. Bishop Hay had tried to question one of the Fletchers, but she would have nothing to do with the matter. He wrote the dismal news to his

colleague in Aberdeen. "Mr. Alex. M. has changed all our plans and I am not well pleased at the manner more than they."[54] A month later, he informed Geddes that Glasgow was "in a poor way", that he had been "informed of many particulars that gave ...pain" and that Mr. Farquharson "who went out there in holy week and staid till after Low Sunday joins entirely in opinion ...that Mr. Alex. cannot be kept there". [55]

At the end of April, Hay had granted Macdonell permission, at the behest of Glengarry, to remain with the Chief in London during the summer. In mid-August he set out for Glasgow, taking the opportunity to visit relatives and acquaintances on the way. It was not really until November, 1794, that he took up his duties in Glasgow. That same month, the bishops learned via rumours and gossip, that Macdonell had been appointed chaplain to the Glengarry Fencible Regiment. It seemed there was nothing to do other than grant him leave to quit the Scottish Mission for the duration of his term of duty with the Regiment.

With the permission to leave secured, Macdonell began to make plans for his successor. He realized that he had not really served the Glasgow Community well and tried to atone for it. On November 3, he agreed to serve the

Mission at his own expense since he was about to have a salary of his own.[56] On November 20, he offered to sell his furniture to either Bishops Hay or Chisholm, the income from which he hoped to pay the deficiencies in the chapel-rent.[57] He began to travel extensively within his mission territory noting in one instance a journey of two hundred miles in one week, taken to baptize some children.[58]

But, he had not realized the distance which had grown between the congregation and himself, nor the animosity they felt towards him because of his high-handed methods, his lengthy absences, his preference for Highland society and his concern for the dispossessed Highlanders. The founding Glasgow Community felt themselves neglected and told Macdonell so, in no uncertain terms, when in November, he called a meeting to collect the chapel rent.

> One gentleman who deems himself the highest pillar of the Congregation would not pay a six pence because I had been so long absent and persuaded as many as he could to follow his example...Others will nothing pay until you [Bishop Hay] come yourself to assure them of leaving a certainty of a clergyman's regular attendance for the ensuing year.[59]

There was more than a little justifictation for the congregation's disappointment in Macdonell. From his appointment to the Glasgow Mission in February-March, 1792 until his departure to join the Glengarry Fencibles in

May-June, 1795, he was away for about nineteen of the thirty-eight months. He admitted to Hay that had he

> known all the consequences that attended my absence from this mission last year and the troubles and anxieties that awaited me in the undertaking I embarked in, no consideration on earth would have made me have acted as I did, not but what I am convinced our plans will answer the principle ends we expected, but why I put myself to so much trouble and vexation for public good or any other man's advantage without necessity...?[60]

Despite his realization of the congregation's resentment and his own admission of absence, Macdonell asked for his half-yearly quota from the Mission, which he said was needed to cover his current expenses and which he should have received the previous November. He noted he had been supporting himself from the previous May, that he had to pay the semi-annual instalment of the chapel rent and that it was a hardship to have received nothing for nine months neither from the Bishop nor the congregation.[61] Macdonell's offer to sell his furniture to the mission and his request for funds from Bishop Hay was all that the good man in Edinburgh could take. Hay contended that the furniture had been purchased with chapel money and much more.

> When you came to settle among them after you returned from Flanders...you broke the contract with the people and by dint of importunity obliged them to give you all the money which they had in their hands...£43...On the other

> hand, the difficulties in which you told me you are involved about the Chapel is a work entirely of your own doing; you neither consulted them, nor gave them any satisfaction about how the rent was to be paid. When they asked about it, you told them it was none of their business. They had nothing to do but pay the seat rents.[62]

In a document[63] drawn up for the purpose at hand, great pains were taken to show that Macdonell had indeed received an amount sufficient to cover expenses permitted under the contract agreed to by the Glasgow Congregation, the Manufacturers and the Scottish Mission and signed in the presence of Bishop John Chisholm. It called for him to receive £30 per annum and a free house but no mission funds. In the summer of 1792, he had written Bishop Geddes for an additional amount from the funds to help him furnish his house, etc. and was granted another £18. Objections were raised to his having spent the money on travelling, mostly to the Highlands and for having given financial assistance to the indigent Highlanders in Glasgow until the Regiment was established. In addition, Bishop Hay bitterly resented his claim to a salary for the period spent away from his Glasgow charge.

In reply, Macdonell, in a very angry and sarcastic tone, advised Hay that relatives had purchased the furniture for him and that the money provided by the Glasgow manufacturers was not to promote religion but was

to encourage his presence as an inducement to potential Highland labourers. He made known his indignation with regard to the accusation that he squandered funds which the Glasgow Mission never had and accused Hay himself of being the cause of the congregations's twelve-month arrears in paying their seat rents.[64]

Clearly there was a misunderstanding of the situation on the part of both Macdonell and Hay which led to, as John Farquharson described it, an irreconcilable "split" betwen them.[65] If Macdonell had felt uneasy about leaving the Glasgow Mission for a military endeavour, the quarrel with Hay and the parishioners should have resolved the issue in favour of the Regiment. It must have appeared more attractive, at the time, to march with his Highland countrymen in the service of both God and King, as chaplain to the Regiment of the Macdonells.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER THREE

1. James Denholm, An Historical Account and Topographical Survey of the City of Glasgow and Suburbs, p.47.

2. Ibid., p.59-60.

3. Ibid., p.74.

4. Robert Reid, Glasgow Past and Present, vol.3, p. 214.

5. James Cleland, A Description of the Manner of Improving the Green of Glasgow..., p.70-71.

6. James Denholm, History of the City of Glasgow and Suburbs, 2d. ed.,, p.223.

7. R. Cowan, Vital Statistics of Glasgow, passim

8. G. Eyre-Todd, History of Glasgow, vol.3, p.315.

9. Cowan, passim

10. E.W.D. Tennant, A Short Account of the Tennant Companies, 1792-1922, p.8-9.

11. Denholm, History of the City, p.219.

12. D.F. MacDonald, Scotland's Shifting Population,1700-1800, p.64.

13. J.M. Reid, Glasgow, p.108-09.

14. Denholm, History of the City, p.65-66.

15. Scotochronicon, p.291.

16. Ibid., p.142, 143 & passim

17. Ibid., p.147-48.

18. Ibid., p.154 & Denholm, An Historical Account, p.40-41.

19. Scotochronicon, p. 160.

20. Ibid., p. 161.

21. MacWilliam, p. 84-85.

22. Anne Fletcher to John Geddes, 28 April 1788, SCA, Blairs.

23. MacWilliam, p. 85.

24. John Geddes to John Reid, 7 February 1787, SCA, Blairs.

25. Glasgow Past and Present, p.252.

26. Ibid., p. 214.

27. MacWilliam, p. 85.

28. Fletcher Correspondence, SCA, BLairs.

29. Scotochronicon, p. 108.

30. Hay to various correspondents, SCA, Blairs.

31. Geddes to Hay, 15 October 1787, SCA, Blairs.

32. Geddes to Hay, Idem.

33. Geddes to Hay, 15 December 1787, SCA, Blairs.

34. Jones's Directory or Useful Pocket Companion for the Year 1789 in and about the City of Glasgow. Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1866.

35. Geddes to Hay, 21 June 1788, SCA, Blairs.

36. Geddes to Hay, 10 February 1791, SCA, Blairs.

37. Idem.

38. Alexander Macdonell, "A Page from the History of the Glengarry Highlanders," p.5.

39. Hay to John Thomson, 13 February 1792, SCA, Blairs & Scotochronicon, p.330.

40. Hay to Geddes, 21 February 1792, SCA, Blairs.

41. Geddes to Hay, 3 May 1792, SCA, Blairs.

42. Geddes to Hay, 31 May 1792, SCA, Blairs.

43. Hay to Macdonell, 3 February 1795, SCA, BLairs.

44. Hay to Geddes, 22 May 1792, SCA, Blairs.

45. Geddes to Hay, 27 August 1792, SCA, Blairs.

46. Geddes to Hay, 25 October 1792, SCA, Blairs & Scotochronicon, p. 335.

47. Hay to Geddes, 8 December 1792, SCA, Blairs.

48. Hay to Geddes, 17 December 1792, SCA, Blairs.

49. Geddes to Hay, 24 December 1792, SCA, Blairs.

50. Idem.

51. Macdonell to Hay, 12 February 1794, SCA, Blairs.

52. Macdonell to Hay, 26 November 1793, SCA, Blairs.

53. Idem.

54. Hay to Geddes, 2 April 1794, SCA, Blairs.

55. Hay to Geddes, 5 May 1794, SCA, Blairs.

56. Macdonell to Hay, 3 November 1794, SCA, Blairs.

57. Macdonell to Hay, 20 November 1794, SCA, Blairs.

58. Macdonell to Hay, 3 November 1794, ibid.,

59. Macdonell to Hay, 20 November 1794, ibid.

60. Macdonell to Hay, 18 March 1795, SCA, Blairs.

61. Idem.

62. Hay to Macdonell, 3 February 1795, SCA, Blairs.

63. "Observations on Mr. Alex. Macdonell's State of Accounts concerning the Glasgow Congregation", 1795, SCA, Blairs.

64. Macdonell to Hay, 17 May 1795, SCA, Blairs.

65. Scotochronicon, p. 383.

IV

THE SWORD - THE GLENGARRY FENCIBLES

BACKGROUND AND FORMATION

"Singular as the circumstances may appear, the idea of raising this corps originated with the Rev. Alexander Macdonell, a Catholic priest..." [1] So begins James Browne's brief sketch of the formation and exploits of the Glengarry Fencibles and while the fact of Macdonell's involvement may have seemed singular to him, neither the idea of a Catholic regiment nor the involvement of clergy in its inception originated with the then Glasgow missionary. In fact the first attempt to form such a regiment in post-Reformation times occurred the very year Macdonell left for Valladolid.

From the mid eighteenth century until the first two decades of the next, Britain was almost always in a state of war. Many of the regiments involved in these engagements had been recruited from the landless and unemployed Highlanders, willing to enlist in order to obtain some relief from their distress. While this occupation in what was perceived to be a righteous cause met with an almost universal approval, it proved a source of concern to a special sector of the community. A large percentage of the Highlanders were

Catholic and it vexed the clergy to know that the men had virtually no access to the exercise of their religion. Bishop Hay himself cited the example of a body of soldiers who had expressed a desire to attend Mass as a group in a public chapel, but had been forbidden by the regimental major. After personally intervening Bishop Hay had received from General Adolphus Oughton the permission for the men to attend, a few at a time, but not as a body, for fear it would have created a disturbance. [2]

Yet, steps had been taken to ameliorate the conditions of the Catholics in the British regiments. In 1778 the government under Lord North appointed Sir John Dalrymple, a Scottish Baron of Exchequer, known as the author of a plan to raise Catholic regiments in Ireland prior to the American War of Independence, as their confidential agent.[3] In his discussions with Dalrymple, Bishop Hay reminded him that despite the restrictions imposed on them many Catholics had enlisted in various regiments and that many of the emigrants who had settled in America prior to 1776 had remained loyal and were now wearing the King's uniform. On February 16,1778, the Bishop outlined in a letter conditions which might encourage Catholics to enter as a body into His Majesty's service.

> ...first a repeal of the old sanguinary laws...I doubt much if they would enter into Service at all as a body unless they were allowed clergymen of their own communion to attend them...

He went on to mention the removal of factious clauses in the Oath of Attestation and that those who entered service be required to swear fidelity to the King and obedience to the laws of war.[4]

Later on that year, on September 12, 1778, a meeting was held in Edinburgh under the auspices of the Catholic proprietors and in the presence of Bishop Hay, Bishop John Macdonald from the Highlands and several leading Highland Catholics. One of the resolutions adopted at the meeting was that of offering to "raise a Catholic Regiment, one thousand strong for the public service".[5] The idea appealed most strongly to the Highland proprietors not only because they were familiar with recruiting methods but also one suspects, that it could be seen as an alternative to eviction, unemployment and emigration, and therefore an easier solution for their land clearances. Even before the meeting Bishop Macdonald had received a letter from Duncan Macdonell, the Chief of Glengarry, whose estates had known evictions in the previous decade stating that he had doubts about the success of the plan because of the rigidity of the War Office, but expressing a desire if it should take place, to be second or third in command.[6] Bishop Hay, perhaps naively, appreciated Glengarry's support of the plan and of his "considering himself of our party in whatever steps might be taken about offering our services to government.[7] Not everybody was

enthusiastic, however, for the Principal of the Scotch College in Paris, Alexander Gordon, happened to be in Edinburgh and attended the meeting. In his letter to his colleague John Reid, he commented that "little had been done...; there was not a man of sense among them but one..."[8]

By January of 1779, there was serious doubt about the possiblity of forming the suggested regiment. Even Bishop Hay in his communications to Dalrylmple noted that the government had been agreeable but that the difficulty lay in the free exercise of religion and the appointment of a Catholic chaplain.[9] Bishop Macdonald wrote from the Highlands that he could not send any encouraging accounts from there and that the only person of note who seemed to keep up his courage in the matter was Scothouse, that is Ranald Macdonell, the fifth of Scothouse.[10]

The plans for the preparation of the regiment that year came to a halt because of the outbreak of hostility against Catholics in Scotland. The violence had been prompted by the introduction of a Bill for the Relief of Catholics and although it passed for England on June 3, 1778, it was dropped for Scotland, and the idea of a Catholic regiment was abandoned until circumstances would permit.

The necessary circumstances were not long in coming, about fifteen years to be exact. During the intervening period, an uneasy peace held sway in Britain. There were

skirmishes, especially on the sea, but none of these took on the seriousness of a declaration of all-out war. On the home front,especially in Scotland, the period of peace had produced an "army" of surplus men. Some had gone to the urban centres to look for work, or to take up the invitation from such as David Dale. But the schemes of David Dale and others were about to meet with disaster. War was declared on France and foreign trade came to a halt, affecting both the importation of the raw materials and the sale of the manufactured product. The mills gradually closed down so that by 1793 the masses of Highlanders were once again idle. The only alternative left to the scattered Highlanders was that of enlisting for military duty in one of the many Regiments which were then being formed. But, Alexander Macdonell sought to keep his countrymen and co-religionists together, and for that purpose, contrived to form a Roman Catholic regiment.

Macdonell's concern with things military was not a sudden phenomenon which came about because his flock were mostly unemployed mill workers. He had noted the recruiting efforts by Huntly in 1790 and in a letter to his cousin Margaret Fraser in 1793, he mentioned residing with Colonel Cameron of Erracht on his way back to Glasgow from Guisachan and that he had been with Glengarry in Invergary for two days.[11] This was at a time when he had been absent from Glasgow for a lengthy period. In fact, upon his return on

November 22, he advised Bishop Hay that he had spent seven weeks journeying from the North.[12] Since he had gone originally to assist his cousin Culbokie who was dying, and whose solicitation of attention required a longer stay than had been anticipated, chances are that he was away from his Glasgow mission for at least three months.

What interest could he have had in common with men like Glengarry and Erracht, aside from the fact that he was a distant relative of each man. He seems to have been aware of the anomaly himself for in the same letter to Margaret Fraser he writes:

> You'll ask me what business I had with such people spending my time so contrary to the spirit of my vocation.

His response hints at his having discussed with her a plan and taking the above associations into consideration, it was probably that of forming a Catholic regiment.

> When I first broac(hed) the subject to you what I expressed upon that occasion was not a joke but the ardent desire of my heart nor would I put even to you the honour of being the author of the plan, for it has been for a long time past frequently revolving in my mind and whatever difficulties may occur in the execution of it or time it may draw I am determined never to relinquish such a favourable project till I see it accomplished except <u>somebody</u> proves unsteady.[13]

Although the wording of the letter is very ambiguous and there is really no indication that the plan was indeed for forming a regiment, subsequent events show that this was probably the case, for it was only two months later that Macdonell informed Bishop Hay that measures were being taken to

establish a Catholic regiment. That the plan was of recent vintage is revealed in Bishop Hay's note to Bishop Geddes upon receipt of Macdonell's notification, in which he states that he was left in the dark until the plan was quite far advanced, although Bishop John Chisholm, as Vicar-Apostolic to the Highland District was apprised of it.

Macdonell's letter is a long one and in it he expresses totally his feelings concerning the clearances and the solutions employed to deal with them.

> Our Highland lairds are more, I do believe, than any other set of men upon the face of the earth actuated by self-interest; as long as they found that interest to depend upon their followers they spared no expense to increase their number and make them live comfortably, but the moment they found their consequence to rise in the estimation of the world in proportion to the number of their pence they immediately turned their backs on their peasantry as useless encumbrances, ejected them by mere force out of their lands to ring in south-country shepherds because these strangers could afford to give more rent for a whole country divided between three or four of them than as many hundreds of small tenants....(they) are in the hands of shepherds or gentlemen who are always in preparation as their own stocks increase to engross the lands of the tenants, remove them a pace only with this reserve that as long as those poor creatures have any subject, their humane masters lesson (sic) every year their holds, increase their rents and multiply their servitude. A few years reduce the most oppulent ones to beggary. This Sir is the cause of all the emigration that has taken place for twenty years past and this has filled all the cotton mills and manufacturies throughout this and the two neighbouring shires with wandering Highlanders.[14]

Having allowed that the manufactories had failed and that emigration was a scourge, Macdonell set out to convince Bishop Hay that the only solution to the problem was a

formally embodied Catholic regiment and that he could see "no hazard to the...well-being of the men fighting for a cause".

> I dare say allow that neither the spiritual or natural life of our gentlemen's sons would not be in greater danger by fighting against the enemies of their country than by fighting against the noxious climates of the East and West Indies...Would it not be an aleviation of their grief to the disconsolate parents of such that their children supplied with the ordinary means of salvation had fallen in defense of their country and of their religion.[15]

As an additional argument he noted that many Catholics were already enlisted in regiments: ninety-two in Breadalbane's Regiment, of the whole company of the Duke of Gordon Fencibles quartered in Edinburgh there were a considerable number, a hundred had enlisted with Cameron of Erracht and another two hundred had enlisted in Glasgow alone during the preceding year.

To add some weight to his proposal and to show that he was not alone in suggesting the formation of a Catholic regiment, Macdonell pointed out that the young Chief of Glengarry, Alexander Ranaldson Macdonell, had given his support and had announced his determination to get his country re-peopled and had stepped forward to the assistance of those "poor objects and offered protection to such as would incline to their native countries". It was true that Glengarry could do much for his people as Macdonell described and he had gone so far as to promise them lands "now occupied by five or six strange individuals" as most of their leases were to be up

within a short time when "Glengarry might provide lands for every man in the Regiment and so soon as he has it in his power he says he'll show to the whole world that he prefers men to sheep. All the men that are with him in the Fencibles rest perfectly satisfied that he'll make good his promise to see them comfortably settled in Glengarry. Their attachment to him is beyond anything you can conceive and not a day passes without he gives some new mark of his to them." He went on to say that the men would follow no other and Glengarry wished to lead no other group, and as if to further impress Bishop Hay he added that Glengarry is even "following instructions to become a Catholic but is hesitating in order to avoid it being considered an act of his youthful impetuosity and bad council." Macdonell could give the Bishop no further information for, as he wrote, he only started the motion without presuming to fix the plan, the rest, he hoped, would be decided at the proposed meeting at Fort Augustus.[16]

And so it was on February 26, 1794, that resolutions were passed to thank the Government for its recent rescinding of the penal laws and to make an offer of raising a Catholic Regiment for the service of the King under certain conditions: that the Highland dress must be adopted as the uniform of the Regiment and that the Major Commandant be Alexander Macdonell of Glengarry. They further proposed that the Regiment consist of ten companies of fifty-seven privates each with the usual

complement of officers and non-commissioned officers to be nominated by the Major...[17] Three deputies to make representation to the Lord Advocate were named by those attending the meeting: Alexander Macdonell of Glengarry, John Fletcher of Dunans and Alexander Macdonell, the Missionary from Glasgow. With letters of introduction from Bishop Hay, the two latter set off on March 13 for London.[18]

Many factors militated against governmental approval for the regiment. There were still powerful persons and bodies who refused to tolerate Catholics,as Macdonell himself wrote, "The Lord Advocate was satisfied but said Catholic proposals were declined for fear of irritating the dissenters".[19] Another source of pressure to refuse the request came from the Duchess of Gordon whose son, the Marquis of Huntly, had been recruiting for some time. Since many of his tenants were Catholics, chances were good that his efforts would have been hampered by Glengarry's recruiting for a Catholic regiment.[20]

But the most serious drawback was Glengarry's own reputation as a vain, self-seeking and irresponsible young man described by Lord Adam Gordon as "a young chieftain composed of vanity and folly".[21] It was while he was a captain with the Strathspey Fencibles that the hundred or so Macdonells who had come with him into the Regiment refused to serve in England and took their "leave" as the Regiment was drawn up in Linlithgow. This was about the third week of March, 1794. The

George the Third by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defendor of the Faith, etc.

To Our Trusty and Well-beloved **Alex^r Macdonell**, Clerk...

We do by these Presents, constitute and appoint you to be ...**Chaplain** to our Glengarry Regiment of Fencible Infantry commanded by our Trusty and Well Beloved Colonel Alexander Macdonell.

You are therefore carefully and diligently to discharge the duty of...chaplain...by doing and performing all and all manner of Things thereunto belonging: and you are to observe and follow such orders and directions from time to time as you shall receive from ...your Colonel...or any other your superior or officer, according to the rules and discipline of War:

Given at Our Court at ...**St. James**...the **fourteenth Day of August 1794**...in the ...thirty-fourth year of our reign

Facsimile after a typescript of the original in the Archdiocesan Archives, Kingston, Ontario.

men held their mutinous position but then said they would "go wherever the King required provided their chief was allowed to march before them". And indeed, at this time Glengarry had in his possession a petition for a leave of absence to go to London in order to propose a Catholic regiment of which he hoped to be Colonel.[22]

Yet, despite the drawbacks, favourable news was given to Glengarry in July when the Ministry apprised him that they were waiting only to hear the outcome of Lord Spencer's mission to Vienna. Finally a letter of service was issued to Glengarry for raising a regiment to serve in Great Britain, Ireland and the Islands of Guernsey and Jersey. Glengarry had been advised to keep its Catholic nature a secret but had informed Dundas that this was the unique character of the Regiment and had no doubt of its success.[23] What Macdonell did not inform neither Bishop Hay nor his own superior in the Highlands, John Chisholm, was that he had been nominated chaplain by a "singular evasion of the existing law", having received his letter of service August 14, 1794.[24] It was not until November that the bishops heard the rumours, as John Chisholm wrote "Glengarry goes on as well as he can with his Regiment and tells the Catholics everywhere he is to have a Catholic chaplain".[25] Bishop Hay's informants were none other than Glengarry's officers who assured him of the Glasgow missionary's appointment as chaplain and he noted in a letter to Bishop Geddes that the three bishops should not withold

their support if the information was correct.[26] A few days after this Macdonell himself confirmed the rumour and was given permission to leave the Scottish mission for the duration of his term as regimental chaplain. It is interesting to note that while Macdonell might have been hesitant about his appoinment as chaplain, Glengarry announced it quite openly. Yet, in May of the following year he asked Henry Dundas if indeed Macdonell was eligible, hoped that he was but if not, submitted the name of a possible substitute.[27] His fickleness was borne out in a more serious matter in late November, 1794, when he sent a letter to his agent in Scamdale directing him to evict the tenants and cottars who refused to join the regiment.[28] This should have been a warning to those, not the least of whom was Macdonell, who had believed Glengarry to be a landowner who was concerned about the well-being of his tenants, that he was a man of capricious and mercurial temperament. One may well suspect that the "someone proves unsteady" referred to by Macdonell in his letter to Margaret Fraser[29] might very well have been the then twenty-year-old chief. The incident was overlooked and Glengarry proceeded with his recruiting.

The hundred or so Macdonells in the Strathspey Fencibles were not forgotten. Representation was made by Glengarry's "vassals" in the Grant Regiment in which they asked permission to be under his banners.

> ...our forefathers pertained to your forefathers and we wish to pertain to you that we in like manner

> might receive protection from you...we hope now that you are your own master and have it in your power that our aged parents, our wives and children and such of our friends as depend upon us should have something for our own sake during our absence and if we chance to return home ourselves that we may know where to betake ourselves. Indeed we expect to enjoy those possessions which our ancestors so long enjoyed under your ancestors though now is in the hands of strangers...[30]

The letter was signed by eight sergeants and thirty-four privates, all Macdonells, and others of various clan origins.

This petition and an earlier letter from Alexander Macdonell noting the difficulties of recruiting because of the number of new Fencible regiments in the Highlands[31] convinced Henry Dundas to permit Glengarry to recruit his "vassals" in the Grant Regiment. It is also possible that the officers of this Regiment were more than happy to comply with a request from the Secretary at War. Alexander Cumming, the Lieutenant-Colonel of the Strathspey Fencibles, had urged Sir James Grant to rid the Regiment of Alexander Ranaldson and his Macdonells and was more than satisfied when the young chief applied for a leave to travel to London to make representation to Henry Dundas on behalf of his own projected Regiment.[32]

Whatever the reason, Dundas' positive response to his request raised Glengarry's spirits to such an extent that he literally poured forth a stream of gratitude and good intentention:

> Nothing on earth could afford me greater satisfaction than to have an opportunity of showing to the world my conduct and that of my men in that Regiment was misrepresented...[33] Gratitude is a ruling passion in my breast and as long as blood circulates in my veins it shall be my study continually to merit that confidence which you have so early placed in me.[34]

His enthusiasm knew no bounds as he proceeded to advise Dundas that the Macdonell Society of Glasgow, with seventy-two fixed members should enroll themselves to be on call in case of invasion and that they be able to join his Regiment. Not satisfied with this one group, he named others, such as the McInnes Society, who were "really Macdonells," who could be induced to join.[35]

Glengarry's suggestion was interpreted as opportunism and meddling and it did not take long before it was attacked. John Dunlop, the Lord Provost of Glasgow, advised Dundas to ignore his proposals and described the chieftain as a "hot-headed, weak, young man" and continued:

> There are four or five people here who come from Glengarry's country...they are infernal democrats. Further, Colonel Macdonell should be informed that Government wants to arm people of respectibility only and in Glasgow, all men of that description and of sound principles have the opportunity of enrolling themselves in an established corps.[36]

Another who seems to have been annoyed by the recruiting carried out on his estates was the Earl of Fife. He had been approached by Mr. Cattanach, a priest whom the Earl described as:

> ...first educated a baker at Banff and after that went to learn Preast lard as a better way to make bread...All the Roman Catholics here I believe are

> Jesuits, the preasts had till lately some allowance from a foreign society, that is now at an end, they must therefore have their support entirely on keeping the poor people in a state of ignorance and disunion...I humbly think arming a distinct Roman Catholick Regiment a very dangerous measure, the allowing them to enlist in a Protestant Corps, is a very different matter.[37]

Despite the protests, Glengarry went on with his recruiting and by the first of March, he was able to inform Dundas that the Regiment comprised six hundred men and that he hoped to have them all assembled for inspetion by March 25. He also informed Dundas that it was his intention to accompany the Regiment wherever it was assigned and took the opportunity to remind the Secretary at War of his request that the Glengarry Regiment be nominated the eldest of the British Fencibles.[38] He seemed quite pleased with himself and his Regiment, apologizing to Dundas at the beginning of April because he had not kept his promise to raise a truly Highland regiment although about 550 of the men were Highlanders, the rest were recruits from the west country, no English and no Irish. On this occasion he offered to raise a battalion of the line.[39]

Indeed, he had made a good impression on some of his acquaintances. One such was Bishop Hay who in a letter to the Abbé Macpherson in Rome described him as:

> ...a most amiable young gentleman ...by his perseverance and good conduct not only got the better of all (his adversaries) but even ingratiated himself much to the government...And his cousin, Mr.Alex^{r} Macdonell to whose advice and his

> assistance he owes a great deal is to go along with him as Chaplain...[40].

The Regiment was billeted at Kilmarnock as of May 1795 and included in its numbers the youngest of the Culbokie sons, Captain Simon Fraser, who had joined without informing his father, nor as was learned much later, without the knowledge of his former guardian, Alexander Macdonell.[41] While this event was innocent enough, it marked the beginning of a rift between the Frasers and Macdonell for they owed Simon's enlisting to the Chaplain's influence.

The Regiment had agreed to serve anywhere within the British Isles and daily expected to move south into England to await transport to one of the troubled areas. In late September they reached Southampton and by November they had taken up their position as part of the garrison on the Island of Guernsey.[42]

GUERNSEY

The Glengarry Fencibles were sent to Guernsey to help garrison the Island and the period spent there was marked by the usual result of inactivity: frustration and squabbling. From the very beginning, according to the Chaplain, Alexander Macdonell, the Lieutennt Governor, Major Generl Henry Dalrymple, had expressed his displeasure with the quality of the regiments supplied by the War Office and had vented his anger "against every individual of the Regiment and had often descended into mean and low, dirty, ill-natured instances".[43] Even the acting Colonel, Donald Macdonell, complained officially to Dundas concerning the Lt. Governor's attitude towards and treatment of the Regiment and noted that the men had asked to be posted anywhere in His Majesty's Dominions more immediately in danger and where active service might be most required.[44]

To be fair to Dalrymple, he was extremely anxious because of the Island's virtual isolation which made it an easy target for the oft-rumoured probable French invasion. He described his situation to Dundas as precarious and hoped for more troops, even such as the Glengarry men.

> Were this number of men, troops, even such as fencibles, bare enough, by the way, of officers fit to command divisions, I should think the enemy very unlikely to succeed.[45]

Yet, despite this sort of left-handed compliment, when the Glengarry and Nottinghamshire Regiments were assigned to the Irish campaign, he wrote that he could not but regret their removal.[46] As Dalrymple had remarked, the Regiments were bare enough of officers fit to command divisions. Even Simon Fraser remarked their frequent absences to his sister,[47] but one must acknowledge that in the tradition of the hastily-formed county regiments of the era, little more was expected. This was in 1796, things would change radically when they served in Ireland.

Even before they had left Southampton the Colonel of the Regiment, Alexander Macdonell of Glengarry had begun to exhibit some of the traits which had earned him his bad reputation with the Strathspey Fencibles in the spring of 1794, namely, peevishness, self-indulgence and irresponsibility. He was angry with Henry Dundas for ignoring him while he was in London and vowed not to aid any of those then recruiting in the Highlands.[48] In October he requested a permanent rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the Regular Army, a request which was stopped.[49] Later on he advised Dundas of his having written Colonel Brownrigg that he might be permitted to purchase the rank of a Captain Lieutenant Macdonell who was attached to the 28th Regiment of the Duke of York, in order to establish his rank. But, he assured Dundas, whatever, "no circumstance would separate him from his men",

despite the fact that the letter is dated from London while the men were then stationed on Guernsey.[50] As the war with France escalated and the conditions in Ireland began to take on the nature of a full-scale rebellion, Glengarry once more disturbed Dundas to complain that someone had dared assume he had not the right to show the ancient crest of the Lord of the Isles.[51] But, Glengarry's most ignoble deed was to occur about six weeks prior to the Regiment's departue for Ireland. He was in attendance at a ball given by the officers of Fort George in Inverness, and took the occasion to offer an insult to a Miss Forbes of Culloden. She was defended by a Lt. Norman McLeod, reportedly a grandson of the famed Flora Macdonald.[52] A duel with pistols ensued, McLeod was wounded and died three days later. Glengarry was tried for murder in the High Court of Justiciary in Inverness and only with the assistance of the same Miss Forbes did he escape conviction.[53] Simon Fraser, who by this time had left the Regiment and was in St. Vincent in the West Indies, gives us an inclination of the low esteem with which the men regarded Glengarry as he responded to the news from his sister:

> I see my old Col. must always be engaged in some ploy or other tho' I am afraid he gains little credit by some of them. However, fighting a few duels while paying his address to Miss Forbes Culloden I think is highly proper you know, none but the brave deserve the fair to show her in the first place he is no coward, is surely one great point carried, is it not ?[54]

Something else happened while the Regiment was on Guernsey the details of which are scant and vague. It was not

until some six years later that Alexander Macdonell made reference to Glengarry's being in trouble with his officers.

> In 1797, Maj. Macdonell, the Adjut. of the Regt. and I prevented Glengarry from being brought to a General Court Martial by some of his officers but before we could succeed we were obliged to give them our obligations to see ample justice done to them in their charges against their Col. provided those charges were substantiated in a private manner by competent judges mutually chosen by both parties.[55]

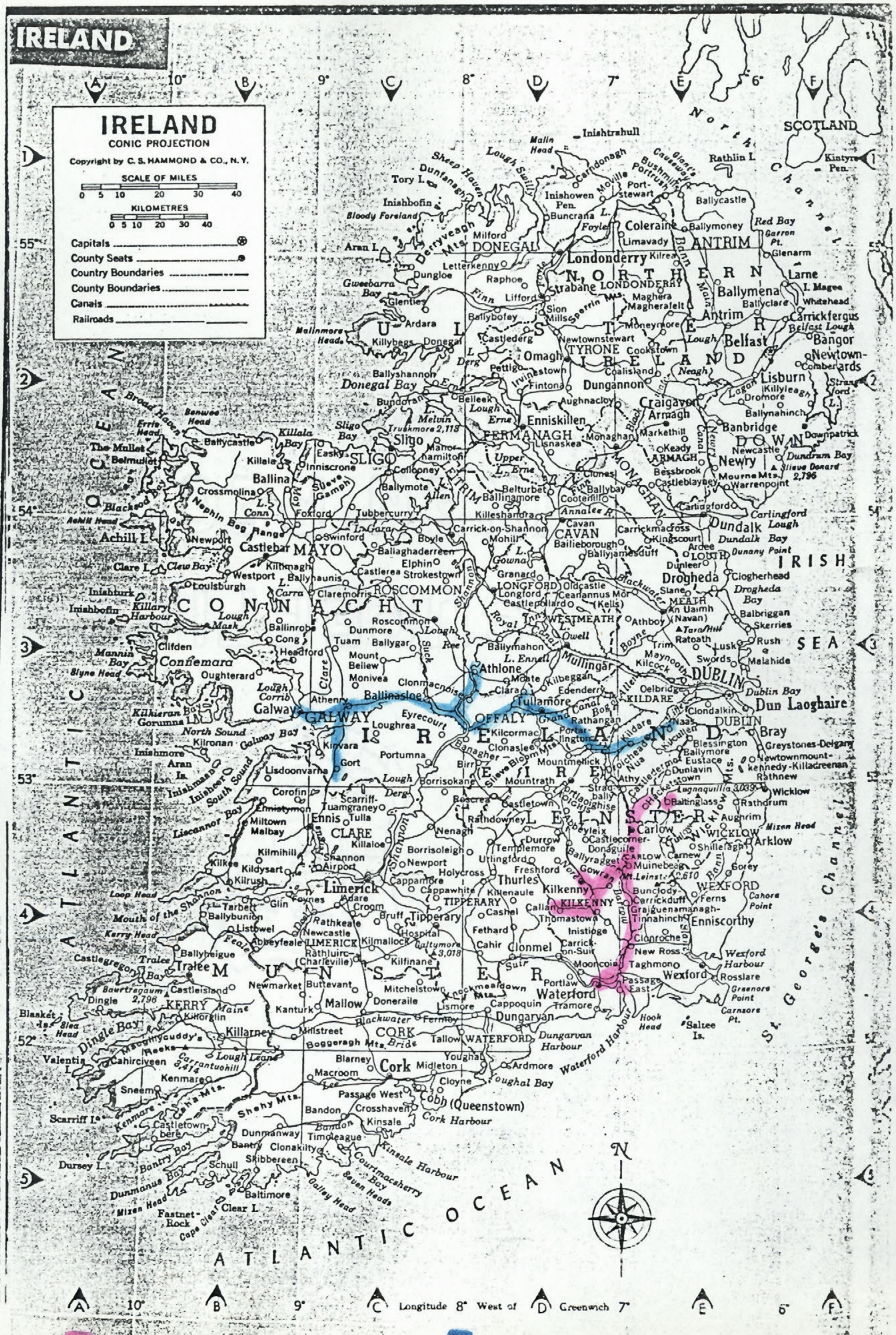
It is quite probable that Glengarry as Colonel of the Regiment having received the Government allowance for payment to the men, failed to meet his obligations. He had a reputation during his entire adult life for being free with money and in debt. Further, it was not uncommon in this era for the "honorary colonels" to help themselves to government money which they considered theirs by implied right of command, all the more for a man like Glengarry who considered the men of the Regiment his "vassals". Whatever the incident and because of it, Macdonell's faith in Glengarry was to meet with a shocking and crude disappointment.

It was in May, 1797 that Donald Macdonell applied to the Ministry for a transfer from Guernsey. Exactly a year later the uprisings in Wexford and general unrest throughout Ireland had made the further reinforcement of troops necessary, although Cornwallis had warned against escalating the situation, thinking rather that it were better to:

> soften the violence of our friends, and to curb the ferocious spirit of our troops...which forms now one of the greatest impediments to the peaceable

settlement of the country.[56]

He had asked Dundas to halt the movement of troops to Ireland unless the French were to land but to no avail. Camden, the Viceroy until June 10, 1798, had asked for a reinforcement of 10,000 men which the Commander-in-Chief, General Sir Ralph Abercromby had said was the minimum needed to defend the country.[57] The very day on which Camden's subsequent resignation was accepted by Cornwallis, the Glengarry and Nottinghamshire Fencible Regiments set sail from Guernsey for Waterford.[58]



REGIMENTAL POSITION: 1798-1799

REGIMENTAL POSITION: 1800-1802

Fig. 1. Glengarry Regimental Colours: 1st British Fencible Regiment. Crest is that of Macdonell of Glengarry.

Fig. 2. King's Colours — Union flag of 1801, incorporating that of St. Patrick.

Photographs courtesy of the Scottish United Services Museum, Edinburgh.

THE REGIMENT IN IRELAND

> When I came to this country two years ago, I found it streaming with blood, the Lord Lieut., a toad in the hands of a violent, hot-headed and narrow minded cabal and the only energies of government were the bayonet, the torch and the cat o'nine tails; murder, rape and robbery were universally committed at the discretion of a licentious rabble in uniform which disgraced the name and character of soldier.[59]

If the greatest part of their term of duty in Ireland can be described as keeping the peace, this was not so of the first months after the Regiment's arrival in Waterford, about the third week of June, 1798.[60] They had been requested to help put down the rebellion which had broken out in Wexford and upon landing, were ordered to march immediately to relieve the beleaguered forces under Major-General Henry Johnson in New Ross. This was the occasion of an incident, which while retold repeatedly with amusement and perhaps some derision, gave an indication that this was not a usual run-of-the-mill regiment. The men had been issued with billet money in preparation for their lodging in Waterford but when the orders were changed, the men realizing they would not use the money, returned it.[61] This would not be the only occasion that these men would elicit a raised eyebrow and for the most part, a nod of gratitude.

Alexander Macdonell marched with the troops, dressed, not as custom would have it in the black attire of the chaplain, but in the regimental plaid of the Macdonells.[62] Nor did he lag behind within the ranks, for

many years later a resident of the town of Gort recalled the "Glengarry Fencibles marching in with their priest at their head".[63] Within the next few days, he was going to have his first real enounter with the effects of rebellion. He had witnessed the after-effects in the Highlands, and had tasted the disquieting turmoil of pre-Revolutionary Paris, but in New Ross, the Regiment engaged the rebels in hand-to hand combat. It was not the bloodshed to which he referred in his correspondence, nor even in his memoirs written so many years later. It was to the condition of the prisoners whom he found to have been ill-treated and totally neglected. It was through his solicitation that the regimental surgeon was sent to the gaols to care for the wounded.[64]

The next few months in Ireland were uncomfortable to say the least. The Regiment was kept on the march or encamped in areas where they were in pursuit of the rebels. As of June 30, they were in Kilkenny and by July 10, they were posted in Hacketstown, "a total ruin, four houses only with the barracks left standing in it".[65] Two weeks later they were part of Sir Charles Asgill's force which set out to intercept the insurgents in the Shlievenamon mountains before they could attack the town of Callan.[66]

In the autumn they set out under General Lake, the same who had devastated the rebel forces at Vinegar Hill in June of that year, for County Wicklow. Here they were required

to restore order and to weed out the rebels who were under the command of the self-styled General Holt.[67] It fell to the lot of the Glengarry men to camp out in the Wicklow Hills even though the snow was three feet deep.[68] Macdonell accompanied the regiment and left us his impression concerning the hardship suffered by the soldiers and the cruelty inflicted on the poor Irish.

> The rebellion is now entirely at an end but a set of bloody orangemen still exercise their wanton cruelties upon the defenceless inhabitants if allowed and would force these unfortunate creatures to the mountains...but for the protection of the British troops and for the earnest _____trances of the Catholic clergy who have certainly contributed in a great measure to tranquilize the country notwithstanding how much their conduct has been misrepresented by the Orange party.[69]

It had been the practice of the Irish rebels to use the mountains as a locale from which to launch an attack and a a refuge when pursued. There they had the advantage of being used to the hills and of being unencumbered by the rigid and awkward uniform worn by the British regiments of the line. However, they had not considered the Highland infantry whose members were inured to the hardships of climbing and the discomfort of rain, sleet and snow, and who were also unencumbered by their uniforms: the kilt and plaid. If the rebels could run to and up the mountains so could the Highlanders. It was no doubt in these hill campaigns such as the Glengarry Fencibles were now engaged that the Irish named them the "Devil's bloodhounds".[70] The Edinburgh Advertiser noted:

> the rebel Holt...had kept undisturbed possession of the mountains and high grounds till the Glengarry Highlanders...arrived there; these with a detachment from the 89th Regt. attacked the rebels the very next morning on the top of Lagnacilla (Lugnaquillia), the highest mountain in the County of Wicklow, which till then had been deemed inaccessible.[71]

Macdonell's opinions concerning the inhabitants and their appreciation of the protection afforded them by some of the British troops was borne out in a letter reprinted in the Advertiser in December:

> A few days ago arrived here a detachment of the Glengarry Highlanders...and the hope of their remaining with us for the winter revives the public confidence of the whole neighbourhood to such a degree that the greatest vigour and industry prevail in raising this town, as well as Hacketstown from the mass of rubbish and confusion in which the rebels had left them. The sober and steady conduct of this detachment confirms the extraordinary reports we have had of the good conduct of that regiment. Their spirit and activity against the rebels can only be equalled by their humanity towards the peaceable and well-disposed inhabitants...their conduct has endeared them so much in this neighbourhood and gained so entirely the confidence of people of every description that we shall ever feel attached to the name of Highlander.[72]

Macdonell's pride in the Regiment was unbounded. In February he further apprised his cousin Margaret about their good reputation in much the same tone as the article which appeared in the Advertiser. But he went further this time in condemning the brutality of the soldiery.

> You will not be displeased to hear that the Glengarry Regiment is a favourite...,almost idolized by the peaceable inhabitants...who found from them the support and protection which they sought in vain from other regiments. The barbarous conduct of the soldiery in general towards the wretched people of

> that unfortunate country exceeds belief. There is no species of cruelty but they exercise on the unhappy victims of their fury. Neither age nor sex was respected...I must observe however that the British troops behaved extremely well, especially the Scots Fencibles, some few individuals excepted and I am sorry to say that several characters belonging to certain Regiments in your neighbourhood may be included in this number.[73]

One can expect to take the opinions concerning the Scottish regiments expressed by Macdonell and the Edinburgh Advertiser as somewhat biased but when the source was no less a personage than the Lord Lieutenant and Commander in Chief in Ireland one is inclined to pay a little more heed. Cornwallis, who was ever critical of the behaviour of the British forces in Ireland, wrote a revealing commentary to Henry Dundas in August 1799 that :

> the English Fencibles with the exception of Lord Grey de Viller's Corps are in general bad trash and the Scotch Fencibles, although they behave in the most orderly manner in their Quarters and have been of great service in tranquilizing the country are for the most part of so diminutive a size and the respective corps so weak in numbers that they would not be capable of any great exertions in the field, they form the force however upon which we can principally rely.[74]

Later, in 1800, he was even more critical, writing:

> I moan over the British Infantry, once the pride of my heart and the terror of our enemies and now by various causes reduced to a state which I am ashamed to mention.[75]

This recommendation of the Glengarry Regiment was due in no small measure to the influence of their chaplain who was instrumental in winning over the brutalized citizenry. Often they found Roman Catholic chapels had been turned into stables by the yeomanry. These he had restored and then

invited the native population to attend services over which he presided. He also discouraged the soldiers from practicing outrage against the populace.[76] The Irish writer Bernard W. Kelly described his effect on the people as "almost magical" especially as they learned that the Regiment was composed of Roman Catholics who spoke their language and whose chaplain readily ministered to their needs.[77]

Sometime in either January or February 1799, the Regiment engaged in pursuit of Michael Dwyer near Rathvely. Dwyer was the leader of a band of rebels and had kept the countryside in a state of turmoil for several months. The rebels had been trapped in a house which was set on fire and the soldiers had but to wait for them to emerge. However, one ran out, drew the fire of the Highlanders and thus permitted Dwyer to escape. In the melée one of the Glengarry men was killed and several were wounded.[78] The incident, which, while a minor one in the annals of the 1798 Rebellion, was deemed dreadful enough by the Irish partisan press that it committed their condemnation of the Scottish Regiment to poetry:

> But the kilted foes around them set
> And fired the house of Connell
> Those hungry Scots, the hounds of death
> Ah, shame on you Macdonell !
> Spirits of the dead, the butchered of Glencoe
> Look down with vengeful ire
> On you, degenerate sons, the murdering crew
> That sought the life of Dwyer,
> Of the freedom-loving Dwyer[79]

It is not certain that Macdonell was nearby when the action took place for the letter addressed to Margaret Fraser is dated February 16, 1799, at London, and the report of the incident appeared in the Edinburgh Advertiser dated Dublin, February 20, 1799. There is a chance though that he was there and in fact that he might have been one of the wounded, although he himself never mentions this.[80]

The year 1799 was a difficlt one for Macdonell if for no other reason than he had to confront and accept the deaths of several persons who had meant a great deal to him. There was that of his "favourite brother" in Jamaica, who "would have been a credit to his name". From his letters he had judged he had had the best of hearts and an enlightened mind. He had been dead for almost two years but the news had just reached him. This might have been the brother referred to in a letter whose death was "sudden and violent". He had left some property but under the circumstances it "would have been a difficult matter to recover it out of the hands of his employers who used no small degree of industry to conceal even his death for fear his friends would have recourse upon them for his subject."[81]

Another cause of pain was the news of the death of Simon Fraser, the youngest of the Culbokie family, who had died on October 12, 1798, in Bermuda. This was tragic for Macdonell because despite the close bond which had formed between them from Simon's student days in Dalchulie, they had

parted in enmity while the Regiment was stationed on Guernsey. Simon, certainly, seems to have felt more animosity than did Macdonell for in a letter to his sister he remarked that he had :

> no room here otherwise I could not help giving you some ill-natured remarks of the Chaplain - however, it's better I have not at any rate till my pet subsides.[82]

The ill-feeling seems to have grown after Simon left the Regiment for he felt he had wasted his time in Glasgow previously and was returning home "an idler", and to make up for this he had decided to go to the West Indies to "make his fortune".[83] The family had blamed Macdonell for persuading Simon to join the Regiment and ultimately for going to the West Indies. Macdonell informed Margaret Fraser that Simon had joined on his own and that he had influenced Glengarry to name him the paymaster. His innocence with regard to Simon's going to the West Indies was borne out later by Simon's eldest brother, William, who informed his sister that it was he who had persuaded Simon to join him as an adventurer.[84]

On February 11, 1799, Macdonell's former teacher and mentor, John Geddes, died in Aberdeen after a lengthy illness. Macdonell has left no indication as to his feelings then but there can be little doubt that he experienced a sense of regret at the loss of "one of his best friends".[86]

One by one the relationships and friendships he had held so dear were faltering or had been lost through death. This was an important period for although painful and probably

unperceived, it was the beginning of the separation of Macdonell from his past. The events of the next few years would cause a decisive and definite severance.

But the business of the Regiment seems to have kept him occupied during his time away from Ireland. There seems to have been trouble within the Regiment for Macdonell mentions dissension and the cashiering by sentence of a General Court Martial of Lt. Col. McLean and Ronald Macdonell (Sandaig). For once, Macdonell is reticent in his enthusiasm for he realized that the "divisions and dissensions of the officers which surfaced during the trial militated much against the Regiment."[86] This was the second time Macdonell referred to problems with the officers, the other being on Guernsey. Whatever the cause, Glengarry was involved and Macdonell was trying his utmost to get some word from him in order to prevent "strong measures" being used "against the Strathglass soldiers".[87]

By the end of 1799, Macdonell seems to have been ready to return to the Regiment in Ireland, which for a good part of 1799 to 1801 was stationed in Galway. Little is heard from Macdonell until the autumn of 1800 when through a strange set of circumstances he was called upon to travel to Vienna to take charge of his ailing cousin, Alexander Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry.

The twenty-seven-year-old "Colonel" of the Glengarry

Regiment had used his offices to obtain permission to travel extensively on the Continent, calling on the commanders whenever the occasion arose.[88] It was while travelling from Italy to Vienna that he became very ill, so that by the time he reached Vienna, Lord Minto whose headquarters were there, would not permit him to travel any further unaccompanied.[89] By September 29, Glengarry had become so violent that he was placed under arrest and held in a lunatic asylum.[90] A series of communications ensued amongst Coll Macdonald, Glengarry's solicitor, Donald Macdonell, the acting Colonel of the Glengarry Regiment and various other friends and relatives and it was finally decided that the Reverend Mr. Macdonell, "one of his (Glengarry's) nearest relations and (who) enjoys his entire confidence", should go to Vienna to accompany him back to London.[91]

The remainder of the Regiments's term of duty in Ireland can be called truly one of peace-keeping for there were only minor skirmishes, and these reflected a reaction to tithes, rack-renting and evictions and were not anti-government in nature. The appreciation of the citizenry was expressed once again through the auspices of the Edinburgh Advertiser upon the Regiment's departure from Galway for Nass and Kildare.

> The extreme good conduct of the officers and privates of this excellent regiment during a continuance above a twelvemonth among us, merits every praise, their peaceable and subordinate demeanour rendering them what the army should always be...May their successors imitate their unoffending and conciliating behaviour.[92]

Despite their having been granted permission to recruit in Ireland in February 1801,[93] it was almost to the day a year later that the Regiment was removed from the Military Establishment, and ordered to return to Scotland.[94] The Peace of Amiens had been signed early in 1802 making unnecessary the numerous auxiliary regiments which had been formed during the previous eight years. The Glengarry Fencibles arrived at Greenock in April, 1802.[95] Most of the officers had been given commissions in the regular regiments of the line but the future was bleak for those who made up the ranks, about 570.

Some years later, Alexander Macdonell commented that he had been cited by the Duke of York, after the Peace of Amiens, for his :

> assiduous attendance during eight years on the Regiment. While every other Regimental Chaplain thought proper to retire upon the allowance made to them by the War Office in the year 1798.[96]

The war had come to an end. It should have been a time for rejoicing and returning to hearth and kin. But the very problem which faced the men was that of a home. Would Glengarry honour his promise to restore the men to the farms from which they had been expelled in the former decade? A renewed opportunity in Glasgow would probably not be forthcoming even though the end to hostility would open trade once again. The entrepreneurial climate had changed and men like David Dale had sold their businesses. The rank and file had no other choice but to hope that Glengarry would keep the

vow made to them in 1794.

Alexander Macdonell's prospects were not as grim as those of the fighting men. He knew he would be welcomed back to the Scottish Mission from which he had never been released totally. It was a different Mission, certainly. Bishop Geddes was dead and in his place was Macdonell's former rector from Valladolid, the dry, wry and demanding, Alexander Cameron. His cousin, John Chisholm, was the Vicar-Apostolic to the Highland District and his immediate superior. The family at Guisachan had broken up, through the deaths of several of the Frasers and the estrangement wrought by Simon's defection to the West Indies and subsequent death there, had never really healed. Macdonell had lost two brothers to the West Indies and his only two remaining relatives, his half-brother Allan and his sister Margaret, were in Canada. So he too was at a cross-road. Could he adjust to the Scottish Mission ? Where would he be appointed? Did he too place his confidence in the word of Glengarry that the farms of Lochaber and Glengarry would once again be in the hands of Macdonells and perhaps see himself as their missionary in the repopulated hills? Whether he was aware of it or not, the determining force was not in the episcopal offices in Edinburgh or Fasnakyle, nor in Invergary nor in Glasgow. The setting was to be London and the circumstances born of betrayal and contempt.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER FOUR

1. James Browne. History of Scotland...v.8, p.141.

2. Scotochronicon, p.154.

3. Ibid., p.144.

4. Ibid., p. 145.

5. Ibid.,p.153.

6. Glengarry to Bishop John Macdonald, 7 September 1778, SCA Blairs.

7. Hay to Mr. Innes, 26 September 1778, SCA Blairs.

8. Scotochronicon, p. 153.

9. Ibid., p.157.

10. Bishop John Macdonald to Hay, 9 January 1779, SCA Blairs.

11. Macdonell to Fraser, 3 December 1793, SCA Preshome.

12. Macdonell to Hay, 26 November 1793, SCA Blairs.

13. Macdonell to Fraser, Ibid.

14. Macdonell to Hay, 12 February 1794, SCA Blairs.

15. Idem.

16. Idem.

17. Scotochronicon, p. 367 and Macdonell to Hay, 26 February 1794, SCA Blairs.

18. Hay to Geddes, 15 March 1794, SCA Blairs.

19. Macdonell to Hay, (ca.) 1 May 1794, SCA Blairs.

20. Scotochronicon, idem.

21. John Prebble, Mutiny, p.302.

22. Ibid., p.311.

23. Macdonell to Hay, 15 August 1794, SCA, Blairs.

24. Scotochronicon, Idem., and London, PRO WO2/37, p.213.

25. Chisholm to Hay, 10 November 1794, SCA, Blairs.

26. Hay to Geddes, 10 November 1794, SCA, Blairs.

27. Col. Alexander Ranaldson Macdonell to Henry Dundas, 27 May 1795, SRO GD51/6/189/3.

28. N. Macdonald, P.137.

29. Macdonell to Fraser, 3 December 1793, SCA, Preshome.

30. [Macdonells] to Glengarry, 27 October 1794, SRO GD51/1/844/3.

31. Macdonell to Dundas, 20 October 1794, SRO GD51/1/839.

32. Prebble, p.316.

33. Glengarry to Dundas, 9 November 1794, SRO GD51/1/844/2.

34. Glengarry to Dundas, 9 November 1794, SRO GD51/1/849/1.

35. Idem.

36. John Dunlop to Lord (?) 28 November 1794, SRO GD51/1/849/2.

37. Earl of Fife to H. Dundas,7 October 1794, SRO GD51/1/831.

38. Glengarry to Dundas, 1 March 1795, SRO GD51/1/864.

39. Glengarry to Dundas, 4 April 1795, SRO GD51/1/6/189/1.

40. Hay to Mcpherson, 12 April 1795, SCA, Blairs.

41. Simon Fraser to Mary Fraser, 3 May 1795, SCA, Preshome.

42. Simon Fraser to Margaret Fraser, 20 November 1795, SCA, Preshome.

43. Macdonell to Margaret Fraser, 8 November 1796, SCA, Preshome.

44. Col. Donald Macdonell to H. Dundas, 11 May 1797, SRO GD51/1/886,

45. Maj.Gen. Henry Dalrymple to H. Dundas, 20 April 1797, PRO WO1/604/239.

46. _____, 5 June 1798, PRO WO1/604/373.

47. Simon Fraser to Margaret Fraser, 10 May 1796, SCA, Preshome.

48. Glengarry to Dundas, 4 September 1795,SRO GD51/6/189/6.

49. _____, 7 October 1795, SRO GD51/6/189/7.

50. _____, 9 February 1796, SRO GD51/6/246/1.

51. _____, 29 January 1798, SRO GD51/6/312/2.

52. J. Prebble. Mutiny, p.294.

53. Edinburgh Advertiser, 11 May 1798; N. Macdonald. The Clan Ranald of Knoydart and Glengarry, p.144.

54. Simon Fraser to Margaret Fraser, 16 July 1798, SCA, Preshome.

55. Macdonell to Margaret Fraser, 26 August 1803, SCA, Preshome.

56. Cornwallis to Dundas, 29 January 1798, SRO GD51/1/331/1.

57. T. Pakenham. The Year of Liberty, p. 216.

58. PRO WO1/604/377.

59. Cornwallis to H. Dundas, 26 June 1800, SRO GD51/1/331/28.

60. Edinburgh Advertiser, 26 June 1798, p.406.

61. Brown, p.146.

62. Simon Fraser to Margaret Fraser, 22 June 1795, SCA, Preshome. Advises his sister he is sending her "six yards of the Regimental tartan which was part of a web Mr. Alexander (the chaplain) had made for himself - very fine".

63. An annotation by Maj. I.H. Scobie in Bernard Kelly. Glengarry Highland Fencible Corps or the Regiment of the Macdonells. Dublin: James Duffy, 1905, p.40, and housed in the United Services Museum, Edinburgh.

> "In 1852 the author of Memoir of a Quiet Life...was on detachment at Gort where the landlady of the inn remembered the Glengarry Fencibles marching in with their priest at their head in '98".

64. A. Macdonell, "The Glengarry Fencibles", p.347.

65. Edinburgh Advertiser, 10 July 1798

66. Ibid., 3 August 1798, p.78.

67. Ibid., 28 September 1798, p. 206.

68. Ibid., 16 November 1798, p.318.

79. Macdonell (in Hacketstown) to Margaret Fraser, 28 October 1798, SCA, Preshome.

70. N. Macdonald, p. 139.

71. Edinburgh Advertiser, 2 November 1798, p. 286.

72. Ibid., 4 December 1798, p. 358.

73. Macdonell (in London) to M. Fraser, 16 February 1799, SCA, Preshome.

74. Cornwallis to Dundas, 19 August 1799, SRO GD51/1/331/19.

75. Cornwallis to Dundas, 16 May 1800, SRO GD51/1/331/27.

76. Alexander Macdonell. "A Short Account of the Emigration from the Highlands of Scotland to North America and the Establishment of the Catholic Diocese of Upper Canada", Kingston,U.C., 1839, p. 6.

77. B. Kelly, The Fate of Glengarry, p. 40-41.

78. Ibid.

79. Quoted in Kelly, p.42.

80. I have not seen any written reference to this wound but in speaking with the Archivist of the Archdiocesan Archives in Kingston, Ont., he mentioned that the rumour had persisted through the years but that the wound was of a delicate nature and therefore not spoken about readily.

81. Macdonell to Margaret Fraser, 6 May 1798, SCA, Preshome.

82. Simon Fraser to Margaret Fraser, 29 April 1798, SCA, Preshome.

83. Macdonell to Margaret Fraser, 6 May 1798, SCA, Preshome.

84. William Fraser to Margaret Fraser, 13 January 1799, SCA, Preshome.

85. Macdonell to Hay, 26 November 1793, SCA, Blairs. Macdonell defended himself against Hay's remonstrances for his "flattering Geddes" by stating he considered Geddes a true friend.

86. Macdonell (in Glasgow) to Margaret Fraser, 29 October 1799,SCA, Preshome.

87. Idem.

88. Thomas Grenville (Berlin) to Lord Minto, 17 August 1799, NLS. MS.11248,f.13. Vide letter of introduction for "Colonel Macdonell who has passed some time in Berlin and wishes to proceed to Dresden." Is trying to obtain for him through Minto the necessary passport.

89. Lord Minto to Macdonald,Esq., 18 August 1800, NLS.MS.11254. f.172.

90. Minto to A. Macdonald, Esq., 29 September 1800, NLS MS.11254.

91. Col. Donald Macdonell (in Galway) to Lord Minto, 4 November 1800, NLS. MS.11263.f.69.

92. Edinburgh Advertiser, 26 May 1801

93. PRO WO26/38.

94. PRO WO8/9 p.744 and WO35/21 p.92.

95. Edinburgh Evening Courant, 22 April 1802.

96. Toronto. Archdiocesan Archives, AA.07.05.

V

DISILLUSION - EMIGRATION

> Government has put in my power the means of being useful to such of the poor Highlanders as are necessitated to leave their own country...while the conduct of one man has given me a complete disgust of this country.[1]

When the Regiment landed at Ayr in April 1802, Macdonell was not with the men and for reasons which did not become apparent until many months later. It was not until July that he first began to write to his ecclesiastical colleagues in Scotland, and even later, to his relatives and friends. What he had to say had much to do with the formation of his desire to start afresh in Upper Canada. In August, 1803, he finally attempted to explain his silence to his cousin Margaret who had complained of his inattention.

> At the time I wrote you last, one of those officers had brought out a writ of arrest against me in London ...and another had brought out the same against the Adjutant in Ireland, who could make no exertion of any kind in his own defence, so that the whole burden lay upon my shoulders. Having got bail for myself in London I proceeded with all possible speed to Dublin to defend the Adjutant, but on my arrival there was actually arrested myself and detained for some time in close confinement but brought cause before the Lord Chancellor of Ireland...[2]

The episode in Ireland was just a taste of what was

to come for upon his return to Ayr he found letters from Glengarry's solicitor Mr.[Alexander] Fraser of Lincoln's Inn, summoning him to London immediately. This seems to have been Easter of 1802, for in his letter he mentioned that he had barely enough time to attend to the Easter duties of the soldiers. Soon after his arrival in London, he found himself in a great deal of trouble for on June 21 he was arrested by the Sherrif of Middlesex, Robert Albion, under a writ of Capias ad Satisfaciendum to appear in court to face charges brought against him by Ranald Macdonell for £2000 debt and £15/11/10 damages plus £290/19 for costs.[3]

How could Alexander Macdonell the former chaplain of the Glengarry Fencible Regiment have managed to become so indebted to Ranald Macdonell, previously a captain with the same Regiment. It is to his credit that Macdonell refrained from mentioning the incident prior to the disbanding of the Regiment but in his lengthy letter to his cousin in 1803, he explained the circumstances which led to his unhappy detention.

> You would probably have heard in the year 1797 that your uncle the Major Mr. MacDonell Shian, the Adjutant of the Regiment and I had prevented Glengarry from being brought to a general Court Martial by some of his officers but before we could succeed were obliged to give them our own obligations to see ample justice done to them in their charges against their Colonel provided those charges were substantiated in a private manner by competent judges mutually chosen by both parties. In pursuance to this obligation those gentlemen prosecuted their claims

> and obtained a decision against us for upwards of a thousand pounds sterling. Our constituent [Glengarry] did not consider himself altogether obliged to support. However I with some difficulty obtained a letter of Relief from him for us all three yet he did not pay the smallest attention either to that or to a still more binding obligation, his honor.[4]

Macdonell appeared before the Honourable Mr. Justice Rooke but

> found all...hopes and expectations completely blasted by Glengarry witholding the aid and support which was his interest as well as his duty to give, and my antagonists taking advantage of my helpless situation smote their cruelties upon me in hopes that my principal would come forward to my relief.[5]

Macdonell's signature to stand bond for Glengarry was enough for him to be found responsible for the debt. Unfortunately, the recently-discharged chaplain had not the means to cover this rather large sum of money and was sentenced to be held until satisfaction was had by the plaintiff. On July 3, 1802, Macdonell was brought to the Fleet prison[6] and for the next three months he spent his confinement between "lock-up houses" and the gaol.[7]

If he had been disappointd with Glengarry's inconsistent and sometimes irrational behaviour previously, he had at least been able to abide it, but his arrest and imprisonment unleashed in him a lasting bitterness and resentment towards his cousin and chief, traits uncharacteristic of Macdonell. His anger was well-founded for his humiliating situation seems to have been dependent on

his being used, in this instance, as a pawn. His cousin Aeneas Chisholm explained the circumstances in a letter to Bishop Cameron's assistant, Charles Maxwell:

> Glengarry says at the long run he will not allow the chaplain to be the loser, but that in the meantime, he will allow him to work his own deliverance as he may come cheaper throu[gh] matters than he would do if he was to interfere. The Macdonells are fond of the law of retalliation, for if the Chaplain is confined by Captain MacDonald, Colonel McDonell took care since to confine the Captain, so that now they are snug, both of them.[8]

Despite Glengarry's promise that Macdonell would not be the loser, the Chaplain remained in prison until someone but not one of his "own brethern" paid his debt. A friend of his in London, "but no relation" advanced all the remainder on the account which had been reduced upon partial payment by Margaret's uncle the Major.[9] On September 9, 1802, a sum of £300/14s/6d was paid to the Court of Common Pleas and on January 4, 1803, Macdonell was discharged,[10] so "indignant at the ingratitude of Glengarry...and so mortified at the conduct of [his] friends" that he would rather not have returned to Scotland had he not wished to recover from Glengarry the money paid by the Major and his friend. True to his word, he had the matter brought before the Court of Session upon his return to Edinburgh about mid-March 1803.[11]

While Macdonell was detained in London during the latter half of 1802 and first two months of 1803, he seems

to have been very involved in discussions with various persons concerning the emigration of Highlanders, especially those who had been discharged from the Glengarry Fencibles. His was not an isolated effort for there had been a renewed interest in emigration. In 1801, for example, when the Regiment was still in Ireland, a minor exodus had occurred from the Western Highlands and from Sir James Grant's Urquhart estates.[12] Figures provided by the Highland Society of Scotland mention two sailings from Fort William of 830 and 700, and 130 from Ullapool.[13] The causes were similar to those which prompted the earlier sailings : estate improvements necessitating the eviction of tenants, higher land rents and more increasingly, enticement from relatives and friends who had settled successfully in North America.

Macdonell's efforts at this time might not have been singular but what was unusual was that as a clergyman and especially a Catholic priest, he was actively involved with emigration agents and was personally recruiting settlers, the families of the Glengarry Fencibles, for British North America. This was indeed a controversial move on his part for a certain sector of society regarded with contempt those associated with the depopulation of the Highlands. Bishop John Chisholm indicated the social, and in this case, ecclesiastical censure which awaited the

the enterprising priest:

> Tell Bishop Cameron inter nos, I have thoughts of suspending him on account of the odium he draws upon us by his emigration schemes and infidelity relative to his obligations to the mission.[14]

The letter was written after Macdonell had informed Bishop Cameron from London that his Majesty's commands had been laid on him "to convey to the Province of Upper Canada such of the Roman Catholics as may determine to emigrate from Scotland."[15]

The bishops should not have been totally surprised at Macdonell's news. They had been made aware of his problems with Glengarry and the humiliation he suffered because of them, as he himself put it to Bishop Cameron:

> Since my enlargement [release from gaol] I have been really ashamed of seeing any but my intimate friends for fear of my misfortune coming to their ears.[16]

Certainly, a desire to get away from this painful situation could be satisfied, in a rather drastic way admittedly, through emigration. But, there were other considerations which affected Macdonell's decision. He could hardly have remained indifferent to the appeals of the numerous emigration agents, especially such as Major Macdonell of Keppoch, who had served with him in the Glengarry Fencibles and who was one of Selkirk's representatives. He had most likely approached the men of the Regiment for the Earl had let it be known that he was interested in recruiting half-pay officers and soldiers for his settlement.[18]

Further, the focus of the emigration agents seems to have rested on the Highland Catholic population for "notices were posted on the doors of the Catholic chapels advertising special rates of passage".[19] Pressure came from the young Colony also. Macdonell's brother and sister who had settled in Glengarry County had been coaxing him to visit and in February 1803, he told Bishop Cameron he had been lodging with his "friend and cousin Captain Archibald [Macdonell (Leek)] from Canada" who had proposed they travel overseas together.[20]

It almost seems to have been a matter of course that Macdonell should have been solicited to travel with the Highlanders. He had been chaplain to the Regiment and fifteen years earlier had started his parochial duties in Badenoch and Lochaber. He was also of a "forward and intrepid disposition",[21] an asset for anyone connected with a pioneer enterprise. Lord Selkirk himself approached Macdonell to make his own planned settlement between Lakes Huron and Superior his ultimate destination. Macdonell refused giving as an excuse that private business would detain him in London. This business was most likely his lawsuit to recover from Glengarry the money paid by others to secure his release for the "Earl offered him an order of £2000 upon his agent as an indemnification for any loss or inconvenience he might incur by leaving so suddenly",[22]

the same amount for which Macdonell had been sued by Ranald Macdonell in the spring of 1802. But Macdonell was an innovator and a leader, not a follower. He may well have been influenced by Selkirk's agents but he was determined to deal with the Government himself, to try to get the best possible conditions for those who would accompany him.

During the period after the disbanding of the Regiment, Macdonell seems to have been concerned primarily with the welfare of the once-again landless and destitute ex-Glengarry infantrymen. It was with this in mind that he took up negotiations with Henry Addington, the current prime minister, who offered:

> 80 acres of land to every head of family together with as much money as would suffice to place four slaves upon every farm, to send a physician and schoolmaster to the new colony and to provide the colonists for a period of three years with as much wine as the doctor should consider necessary for the preservation of their health, and further to bestow upon Mr. Macdonell and also upon a few of his friends, such salaries as would make them independent in their circumstances.[23]

But, the Colony he had in mind was Trinidad which had been ceded to Britain by Spain. It was the intention of the British Government to establish a model colony there "in the healthiest situation".[24] Nothing could have been worse in the opinion of Macdonell for he knew well the perils which awaited the European who settled in the West Indies. He still harboured bitter memories of relatives and friends who had succumbed to fever or foul-play. Simon

Fraser had taken ill on the Island of St. Vincent and had died in Bermuda. His favourite brother had died in Jamaica and three cousins, Colin, Roderick and Peter Chisholm had all met untimely deaths there. Macdonell could not be convinced no matter how enticing the conditions were. Addington then proposed coastal lands in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick because the government considered Upper Canada as too risky to permit the expenditure of public money.[24]. But, using a counter-argument, Macdonell convinced Addington that it was to the advantage of the young Colony, threatened as it might well be by seditious and even aggressive onslaughts from the United States, to settle the discharged infantrymen in Upper Canada, noting it was an area where many of their relatives had established themselves. He persuaded the Prime Minister, who "regretted so many were reduced to quitting the country forever," that as no other alternatives were possible he should direct them to Upper Canada.[25] And so, according to Bishop Cameron's assistant in Edinburgh:

> near 20,000 are ready to emigrate this summer among them Mr.McDonell the chaplain of the late Glengarry Regiment [who] has obtained from our Government a grant of land in Canada: 1200 acres for himself and 200 acres for every family that goes with him.[26]

But, what of the Mission in Scotland and the oath he took to serve until released by his bishop. Macdonell did not seem too concerned about this procedure. In fact,

he irritated the bishops, especially his cousin and superior, John Chisholm, by announcing his impending emigration as a fait accompli, a manner of behaviour reminiscent of his becoming chaplain to the Glengarry Regiment. It was not only that the bishops' authority had been ignored and that Macdonell had scandalized some of the Catholic soldiers by indicating he was going to America whether or not he was granted leave,[27], but also the Mission desperately needed him. As early as July, 1802, three months after the Regiment had disbanded in Ayr, John Chisholm had expressed his anxiety concerning Macdonell's long stay in London:

> I wish matters may be all right with him. He is the only one that I could in the present circumstance spare for Glasgow.[28]

In February 1803, the impetus to leave London came, not as a response to a summons from the bishops but as a result of a "falling out with some of his friends there." What had been detaining him after his release from prison were his preparations to sue Glengarry. However, matters had been arranged sufficiently to allow him to return to Edinburgh within a short time.[29] Finally on March 7, 1803, he was able to write Bishop Cameron that he had received papers of dismissal from his solicitor Mr. Fraser and was about to leave the capital.[30]

One might suspect that Macdonell delayed his return to Scotland in order to avoid having to account for his

conduct while he had been on leave from the Mission for his reputation had been somewhat tarnished. He had allied himself with emigration agents, and was in fact, recruiting families, had impressed his superiors with his military rather than his religious fervour and from London had come the rumour of scandal.

> I am very sorry to inform you that a too well grounded report is current, that the late unhappy Chaplain of the Glengarry fencibles is upon the point of bringing infamy on himself and shame on us all. It appears he marries a young girl, whom he assured he was under no engagement incompatible with marriage. The girl's father is by this time, informed of the contrary, but I am afraid she is already too much deluded to draw back.[31]

This latter episode seems to have been an effort on the part of Glengarry to besmirch Macdonell's character and thereby redeem his own.[32] However, the next few lines of Cameron's letter reveal far more, for they suggest that Macdonell's behaviour had indeed caused eyebrows to rise on several occasions:

> I am not without strong suspicions that she is not the first he has deceived: many hints, which I had formerly despised, upon the character he bore amongst those and so ought to know him, recur to me now and confirm my suspicions.[33]

But Bishop Cameron had determined that if he could not convince Macdonell to remain in the Mission, he would try to rekindle in him the spirit of his original vocation before he left the country.

> Mr. Alex^{r} Macdonell...has been with me here ever since his arrival from London and I wish to keep him as long as he is in this country. Our old relations are not forgotten - they may be of some

> use to him and consequently of some satisfaction to me.[34].

It was in this spirit also that he wrote to John Chisholm suggesting that they rely on Macdonell's qualities. Chisholm's response reveals his dismay and misgivings concerning his "military cousin":

> All you say relative to the Chaplain are extremely agreeable to the feelings of my heart; but from what I conceive to be my knowledge of him for some time past I cannot say the whole is so to the conception of my head. His having written to some of this coast of late that he was going to America without asking leave, his having signified to some of the Catholic soldiers that he did not mind whether he got leave or not has given a great scandal to his brethern and others. I have no great expectation from what he is either willing or able to do in the wilds of Canada among frost and snow and extreme heat which they have by turns and for which he has no constitution...You desire me in your last not to embarrass him if your company has not changed him. It is my opinion my military cousin would not be much embarrassed by anything I could write him provided other circumstances smiled upon him (all this inter nos)[35]

Bishop Cameron did not divulge how he was going to reorient Macdonell. He simply stated he was going to renew their old acquaintance. It is safe to speculate that much of this would involve a return to their Valladolid relationship of master and student and would concern as it did from 1780 to 1787, the needs of the Mission and the duties pertaining thereto. But first, he had to divert Macdonell's attention away from his secular affairs back to the Mission, a difficult task, for the embittered priest had only one thought in mind : to recover from Glengarry the money which had been paid out to secure his release,

and then leave for Canada.

Although he would not have considered it so, Macdonell was fortunate in that Glengarry's solicitors had been instructed to stall as often as they could in the hope he would grow weary, give up his case and leave the country. However, the tactic kept Macdonell in Edinburgh longer than he had expected; long enough for him to once again enjoy the influence of Alexander Cameron and to sense the pulse of the Scottish Mission. By July, 1803, Cameron thought enough of him to let the priest look after some of his affairs in Edinburgh while he went to Aberdeen. It was during the Bishop's absence that Macdonell informed him that Dalness, one of Glengarry's agents, had been instructed to ask for a settlement by arbitration, to which Macdonell and his advisor Mr. Rolland had agreed.[36]

One of the duties Macdonell had to perform and seemingly painful to him, was that of asking from his superior, John Chisholm, leave to quit the Scottish Mission in order to emigrate to Canada. With this in mind, he started north to visit his cousin in Lismore, in October, 1803. On the way, he stopped in Glasgow to conduct services for the parish he had established some eleven years earlier. He was dismayed to find only twenty Highlanders in attendance despite the fact that he had given a list of some 500 names to his successor in 1794. A similar

disappointment awaited him in Greenock where though upwards of 200, only a few attended the Mass.[37]

When he arrived in Lismore, a letter advising his immediate return to Edinburgh was waiting for him, for Glengarry had arrived in the capital and was planning to take advantage of his absence.[38] He was able to request leave of John Chisholm, at the time of his departure, but was asked to postone this demand until the business with Glengarry was finished and to consider, in the interim, taking charge of the mission on Barra which had been recently vacated through the death of the incumbent. Bishop Chisholm had not reconciled himself to the fact that Macdonell was determined to emigrate and still held out hope that he would remain in the Scottish Mission.[39]

He was still angry about Macdonell's involvement in emigration schemes and despite having warned him again not to take charge of emigrants he had heard of his having solicited in writing various of the Highland families. He was so upset by this that he advised Bishop Cameron that if Macdonell meddled any further with emigration he could:

> ask leave to go to America from any other ...such as choose to emigrate may manage their own affairs and let him attend to his spiritual duties...am perfectly convinced this is the best line of conduct he can follow however good his intentions and views may be in acting in a different capacity which experience might have taught him before he began his emigration scheme.[40]

This rather angry comment from Chisholm must be

considered within the context of the whole situation for he had just received an ultimatum from Glengarry himself to the effect that:

> his former friendship towards the Catholics would be soon the reverse if his request to suspend Mr. Alex on receipt in his defense in justice to his injured honour and the chaplain's ingratitude was refused.[41]

Glengarry had asked satisfaction of his antagonist through the Bishop because Macdonell was not a layman, but once again, he warned the prelate that he "would do well to weigh the justness of his demand with the consequences that [might] follow a refusal".[42]

Chisholm's annoyance was made even greater because after having received a written account from Macdonell concerning his case, he felt it was artful and made:

> very cooly and deliberately a most detestable character of Glengarry while it gives a little more importance to the writer than I would wish him to take in other circumstances.[43]

To Chisholm's credit, he did not succumb to Glengarry's intimidation but requested that Macdonell whom he had heard had won his case, be favourable to Glengarry after he had given satisfaction to his creditors and doing himself less than justice.[44]

Chisholm might well have heard that Macdonell had won, but the Chaplain informed his cousin Anna Fraser Macdonell that Dalness, Glengarry's solicitor had visited him to discuss an obstacle to the settlement and that he

hoped it would come to an end in a few weeks.[45] The anticipated few weeks turned into months and in late spring of the following year, he wrote to his cousins who were now mourning the death of their brother John that he would not be able to visit them because he had to take care of his business:

> Every engine that the wiles of the law, professional ingenuity and chiconery [sic] could devise have been set at forth not only to retard and procrastinate the business but to tease and harrass me in the meantime. Dalness has even gone the length of commencing prosecution for defamation against me because I had given the perusal of some of my papers to Mr. Macdonald Prichounon(?) and to Fraser and Son who requested it of me because Dalness had given them a reading of his papers.[46]

Macdonell's prolonged delay in Edinburgh enabled him to assist his cousin John Fraser who had returned from the Island of Domenica and was incurably ill. His attitude seems to have taken on once again a spiritual dimension, for he seemed very concerned that John make his peace with God, and noted, with satisfaction, that he had asked to see Bishop Cameron about two weeks prior to his death. In his letter of consolation to the Culbokie family, Macdonell asked them not to lament too much for he considered John to be far better off than if he had lived to return to the West Indies, perhaps to the perdition of his soul.[47]

As the summer of 1804 approached, Macdonell became more and more restless. Many of the families who had wanted to emigrate with him had gone the previous year. To add to

his distress, pressure was now applied from the Bishop of Quebec who informed him that the Gaelic-speaking inhabitants of Upper Canada were without pastoral care since the two Scottish missionaries Fathers Alexander Macdonell (Scotus) and Roderick Macdonell had died within months of each other in 1803. Macdonell determined that he would take the County of Glengarry (Upper Canada) as his mission where they had been:

> already upwards of a twelvemonth without a pastor; there are four hundred Catholic families in one parish, all emigrants and so impatient are they become for a clergyman, that they deputed two of their number down to Montreal to know from Captain Macdonell Lich [Leek] and other of my friends there with whom I used to correspond whether they could depend on my being out this season...from Montreal they went to see the Bishop of Quebec and he has promised to pay passage there this season.[48]

July became August and still the case had not been settled. Time was running out for trans-Atlantic voyages seldom went beyond the late summer, especially to the port of Quebec. Then, suddenly, a chance to sail for Quebec City came at the end of August and he received from the Arbiter permission to leave the country without prejudice to his case. He did not have time for farewells nor final visits. He thanked Bishop Cameron, who was in Aberdeen at the time, for granting him the necessary "leave" which his cousin had witheld, and promised to try to heal the rift which had formed between them.[49] He mentioned to Margaret Fraser how difficult it had been for him to choose

between seeing his friends and relatives once again and turning his back on his business before bringing it to a determination after having taken so much time about it. In a few sentences, he indicated his aspirations and hopes pertaining to the second chance granted to him, to work once more as a missionary, this time in the New World:

> the reflection of having been myself for so many years wasting my time in occupations not quite congenial to the spirit of my vocation added much weight to this last consideration...making every idea of interest, of inclination or natural feeling, yield to what I conceive to be my bounden duty in bringing with all possible speed, spiritual relief to the heavy charge which is now committed to my care.[50]

Macdonell set sail aboard the Caledonia on August 31, 1804, but the ship was forced to turn back because the vessel was taking in too much water. After a short delay, he resumed his voyage aboard another ship, in, as he described them, very comfortable quarters.[51] Bishop Cameron could not change, and as far as one can surmise, did not try too hard to do so, Macdonell's desire to emigrate. What he managed to do, as is evidenced in the above quotation, was rekindle the missionary zeal which Macdonell seemed to have lost prior to his return to Edinburgh in 1803. He, no doubt, felt the satisfaction of the successful teacher and friend, when for a second time he was able to send Alexander Macdonell, a competent and well-formed missionary-priest, as a pastor to the Highlanders, but this time, in Canada.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER FIVE

1. Macdonell to Margaret Fraser, 26 August 1803, SCA, Preshome

2. Idem.

3. PRO Pris.1/19, p.278, case 9755.

4. Macdonell to Fraser, idem.

5. Idem.

6. PRO Pris.1/19, p.278, case 9755 and PRO Pris.2/no.86

7. Macdonell to Fraser, idem.

8. A. Chisholm to the (Reverend) Charles Maxwell, 3 August 1802, SCA, Blairs.

9. Macdonell to Margaret Fraser, idem.

10. PRO Pris.3/8 [1803]

11. Macdonell to Margaret Fraser, idem.

12. Bumsted, p.88.

13. Highland Society of Scotland. First Report, 12 January 1802, SRO GD51/5/52/1.

14.John Chisholm to Charles Maxwell, 12 April 1803, SCA, Blairs.

15. Macdonell to Alexander Cameron, 7 March 1803, SCA, Blairs.

16. Macdonell to Cameron, 10 February 1803, SCA, Blairs.

17. Macdonell to Margaret Fraser, idem.

18. Highland Society of Scotland. Second Report, 28 June 1802. SRO GD51/5/52/5.

19. SRO GD51/5/52/1, idem.

20. Macdonell to Bishop Cameron, 10 February 1803, SCA, Blairs. Captain Archibald Macdonell (Macdonald) of the Long Sault, eldest son of John Macdonell (Leek).

21. Hay to Geddes, 17 December 1792, SCA, Blairs.

22. J.A. Macdonell, Sketches..., p.146. I suspect that if not Selkirk himself, one of his associates arranged for Macdonell's release. The complete case summary which would have provided the names of the creditors could not be located in the PRO. The date of exchange between Macdonell and Selkirk is given as September 1803, six months after he had told Bishop Cameron that he was going to take a group of emigrants to Upper Canada. One might conclude from this and a remark in his letter to Margaret Fraser, 26 August 1803, that he had not quite "fixed his destination".

23. Alexander Macdonell, A Short Account of the Emigration..., p.9-10.

24. Alexander Macdonell, "A Page from the Glengarry Highlanders", p.107.

25. Macdonell to Cameron, 7 March 1803, SCA, Blairs.

26. Charles Maxwell to the Abbé Paul MacPherson, 8 June 1803, SCA, Blairs. The land grants seem to have been the usual amounts granted to officers (1200) and enlisted men (200). The Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, Lt.-Gen. Hunter was informed to this effect by Lord Hobart in March 1803, quoted in J.A. Macdonell, Sketches...,p.147.

27. John Chisholm to Alexander Cameron, 5 June 1803, SCA, Blairs.

28. John Chisholm to Charles Maxwell, 9 July 1802, SCA, Blairs.

29. Macdonell to Alexander Cameron, 10 February 1803, SCA, Blairs.

30. Macdonell to Cameron, 7 March 1803, SCA, Blairs.

31. Cameron to George Hay, 2 February 1803, SCA, Blairs.

32. Christine Johnson, Review of The People's Clearance by J. Bumsted, Innes Review 34 (1983) p.46-7.

33. Cameron to Hay, idem.It is not clear whether Cameron meant that Macdonell had deceived other women into believing he was a potential suitor or if he meant Macdonell had pretended to be other than he was - a Catholic priest bound by sacred oath to serve the Scottish Mission. There is no indication in works about Macdonell or in his own letters, either in Scotland or Canada that he was ever romantically involved. It seems too simple and somewhat hasty to accept as fact what was most likely, as Christine Johnson has remarked, vide f.32, a malicious rumour circulated in London in order to negatively influence Macdonell's case.
34. Cameron to Hay, 14 April 1803, SCA, Blairs.

35. Chisholm to Cameron, 5 June 1803, SCA, Blairs.

36. Macdonell to Cameron, 16 July 1803, SCA, Blairs.

37. Macdonell to Cameron, 24 October 1803, SCA, Blairs.

38. Macdonell to Margaret Fraser, 5 November 1803, SCA, Blairs.

39. Chisholm to Cameron, 26 December 1803, SCA, Blairs.

40. Idem.

41. Idem.

42. Idem.

43. Idem.

44. Idem.

45. Macdonell to Anna Macdonell, 9 December 1803, SCA, Preshome.

46. Macdonell to Anna Macdonell, 24 April 1804, SCA, Preshome.

47. Macdonell to Anna Macdonell, 22 March 1804, SCA, Preshome.

48. Macdonell to Anna Macdonell, 16 July 1804, SCA, Preshome.

49. Macdonell to Alexander Cameron, 29 August 1804, SCA, Blairs.

50. Macdonell to Margaret Fraser, 30 August 1804, SCA, Preshome.

51. Macdonell to Alexander Cameron, 3 September 1804, SCA, Blairs.

CONCLUSION

> He is of a forward, intrepid disposition but I have often seen when Providence has a mind to bring about any event, he qualifies the instruments he makes use of for the purpose and very often a certain degree of boldness produces much better effect than too much timidity.[1]

Bishop Hay's assessment of Macdonell's character was written five years after the young missionary had returned from the Seminary in Spain. When he returned to begin his parochial duties, he came in relative obscurity, for he had neither recognized family connections nor the scholar's reputation, either of which would have made the launching of his career much easier. What he did have though, was a burning desire to impress and succeed in whatever endeavour he was engaged. It was in this respect that Macdonell's singularity began to unfold for within the first months of his appointment to Badenoch he gave evidence of a penchant for building or acquiring better chapels or living quarters, which if not grandiose, were at least costly. It was a habit which would get him into trouble on more than one occasion even prior to his leaving the Scottish Mission. He also exhibited a trait which marked him throughout his long life, one which would earn him both credit and scorn. He seems to have preferred

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[1]Vide Chap.3,ff.48

the company of the wealthy and powerful, the socially prominent and the military, either to that of his fellow clergymen or persons of ordinary means, and he openly sought their patronage. His relationships and undertakings were aimed at securing acceptance or praise from this sector of society. This might have been in response to a psychological need for approval prompted by his rather ordinary background, or because of the inbred respect for authority or noble birth, a characteristic indigenous to the ancient clan structure, or because he realized that success depended on cultivating those in a position to benefit him and thus his mission. Further, most of those who were in such a position were non-Catholic. Few were openly hostile, yet Macdonell seems to have felt that, hostile or not, he had to prove himself worthy of their admiration and trust in order to be fully acknowledged as one of them.

After a good start in the Highlands where he enjoyed some success in establishing chapel sites in Badenoch and Lochaber, he was appointed to a much more challenging position in Glasgow. Here he took a special pride in his successful negotiations with the leading businessmen. In addition he made valuable contacts with several Presbyterian clergymen and University professors. His appointment to Glasgow was curtailed partly at his own request to be released temporarily from the Scottish Mission to become chaplain to the Glengarry

Fencible Regiment and also in response to the ill-feeling of the congregation which had developed towards him. Glasgow was his first real encounter with rejection and failure, although he would never had considered it so.

He was leaving the Mission to be amongst military men and his own clansmen and was now recognized as both confidant and cousin to the hereditary chief of the Macdonells, Alasdair Ranaldson Macdonell. He had, as Bishop Hay was to remark some time later, more than anyone else, inspired the founding of the Catholic Regiment and was the driving force behind its successful formation. His name and reputation as an energetic, competent individual, at times an upstart, if you will, had gone beyond the borders of the Highlands, Glasgow and Edinburgh and had penetrated to the very epicentre of government, the Prime Minister's offices in London. He had had correspondence with Henry Dundas, the Secretary of War and prior to the Peace of Amiens and for sometime afterwards, his experience with and concern for the destitute and landless or expelled Highlanders earned him the confidence of Henry Addington, the then Prime Minister.

If there was a truly happy period during Macdonell's Scottish years, it was probably his eight years with the Regiment. He regarded himself and was considered by others as a man of authority and responsibility. He did not shirk his duties in any way nor did he engage in alternate schemes. He

seems to have been truly content for his work as regimental chaplain allowed him full expression of his religious training and special talents and provided him with an outlet for his personal ambitions.

If this was the happiest period, the most dismal occurred within weeks of the disbanding of the Regiment. The man whose confidence and respect Macdonell had sought even from their first meeting when Glengarry was yet a youth, was about to betray their friendship in such a way that the incident must be considered the crucial issue in Macdonell's decision to leave the Scottish Mission for Upper Canada. The humiliation of his incarceration, Glengarry's unconcerned dismissal of his entreaties for justice and relief, and the ugly rumours spread about him in London were more than enough to make an otherwise very difficult decision to leave Scotland easier.

There is no doubt that the Scottish bishops wanted Macdonell to return to work within their dioceses. Bishop John Chisholm's angry letters make this quite clear. But, if opportunity was uncertain in Scotland this was not the case in Upper Canada. Macdonell had made representation to Henry Addington for the Highlanders and had his way in obtaining for them lands in Upper Canada rather than the West Indies. He was already well-known to the ruling families there and had made valuable contacts with either the military men or

emigration agents who were playing an important role in the establishment of viable communities there. There was yet another advantage for there were no penalties against Roman Catholics in the Canadas. It is true that many of the restrictions had been abolished in Britain but Catholics had not yet received fully their civil rights, such as, for example, the right to sit in Parliament.

In 1794, Angus Chisholm composed the following epitaph for his cousin who was about to join the Regiment.

> Here lies Sandy tall
> A politician and that is all[2]

It had become evident to one and all that Macdonell was a very able politician but one must take issue with the rest of the sentiment for he was more than than. The implication is that he lacked the qualities and interests which were more suited to the role of a clergyman: compassion, humility, piety, obedience to his superiors, concern for his parish and parishoners. Macdonell certainly cannot be considered heartless. He fought for the best conditions he could get, in Glasgow and later in Upper Canada, not for himself but for the emigrant Highlanders. In Ireland he saw to it that the captured, wounded or ailing enemy were cared for and protected from the bloodthirsty rabble, military or otherwise. He also ministered to the inhabitants there, thus earning for himself

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[2]Vide Chap.1, ff.79.

and the Regiment an acknowledged gratitude and respect. His compassion for the native Irish is reflected in his letters to his cousins wherein he comments on the cruelty of those who were then in a politically or socially dominant position, whose cause, more or less, the Regiment was defending.

It can be argued that he was arrogant, vain, probably, had a rather perfunctory respect for his clerical superiors and showed little evidence of piety. But, as Bishop Hay had unwittingly prophesied, Providence was to qualify the instrument. After his unhappy detention in London, he returned briefly to Scotland, wiser and chastened and more than willing to heed the advice of his former rector. His motivation and abilities were directed to those of a minister of religion, and, even before his departure for Upper Canada, he gave evidence of a successful reorientation.

He was at ease in the company of political, business and military men and took pleasure in negotiating or planning schemes with them. In this he was truly an able politician. But he was also their leader to numbers of clansmen, bereft of their farms and homesteads in the Highlands. With him as guide, sponsor, advisor and protector, they sought to build a community first in Glasgow and then in Upper Canada. Were it not for an accident of heredity, one might claim that Alexander Macdonell, at age forty-two, became the Chieftain to the exiled clan Macdonell.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

When J.A. Macdonell wrote his biography of Alexander Macdonell, he noted that the Bishop had had in his possession much of the correspondence relating to the position of the Catholic party in Ireland (1801) but that since his death most of his papers had disappeared. No doubt, the Bishop had retained much more than this particular file of correspondence but only the letters and documents written while in Canada, and several accounts of his involvement with the Glengarry emigration of 1802-3 seem to have survived. This probably accounts for the fact that nearly all biographies are based on Macdonell's own recounting of his experiences prior to his arrival in Upper Canada as contained in his "A Page from the History of the Glengarry Highlanders" and A Short Account of the Emigration from the Highlands of Scotland to North America and the Establishment of the Catholic Diocese of Upper Canada. It also accounts for the rather scant details which

characterize these early biographies for Macdonell revealed only those things which he deemed important or of which he was particularly proud.

The task at hand, then, was to find enough information which would make a biography of the years prior to Macdonell's coming to North America, feasible. One visit to the Scottish Catholic Archives in Edinburgh was enough to assure that much of the required information was held in their vaults, especially in the two files of letters : Blairs and Preshome.

The Blairs Letters is a collection of the correspondence kept by the various clergy in Scotland, primarily, the bishops. For the purpose of this study, the letters written between the years 1762-1807 were consulted, and of this group, those to and from the bishops, especially Hay, Geddes, John Chisholm, and after 1802, Alexander Cameron, were carefully scrutinized for any information pertaining to Macdonell. These letters are invaluable for the insight they provide into Macdonell's career as a missionary in the Highlands, his activity in Glasgow and the part played by the church in the formation of the Glengarry Fencibles. Also contained in this grouping of letters were several written by Macdonell himself to Bishops Geddes, Hay and Cameron. Although not numerous, they provide Macdonell's own definition and appreciation of his role as missionary and a description of the two missions involved:

Badenoch and Lochaber and later, Glasgow. Further, the series of letters among Bishops John Chisholm and Alexander Cameron, and the Reverend Charles Maxwell, Bishop Cameron's assistant, reveal Macdonell's plight subsequent to the disbanding of the Glengarry Fencible Regiment. These letters, along with Macdonell's lengthy letter to his cousin Margaret Fraser contained in the Preshome Letters, are the only sources which mention his arrest and imprisonment, although, the official documents in London corroborate the details.

The Preshome Letters, on the other hand, are not official in nature but are personal letters. Those consulted had belonged to various members of the Fraser of Culbokie Family. These came into the possession of the Scottish Catholic Archives because they had originally belonged to Bishop James Kyle (1788-1869), a descendant of Anna Macdonell (Scotos), one of the Fraser of Culbokie sisters with whom Macdonell corresponded, and an inveterate collector of material pertinent to the history of the Catholic Church in Scotland. These letters lack the somewhat formal tone of the Blairs Letters, and thereby reveal a good deal of the personal interests, plans and ambitions of the youthful missionary, the lofty and sometimes, worldly attitude of the military chaplain and finally, the unhappiness of the friend and advisor deceived by the man he

admired most. These letters contain most of Macdonell's references to the 1798 Rebellion in Ireland and the lengthiest expose of his problems with Glengarry.

Because much of the information contained in the Letters needed amplification a good deal of research was carried out in other Archives. The Public Archives of Canada, the Archdiocesan Archives in Kingston, Ontario and Toronto, all contained information which shed a little light on his birth, family and early education. The Glasgow Room of the Mitchell Library in Glasgow contains much referring to the history of that city. The files, especially those containing the commercial records were searched for references to Macdonell but proved empty. However, two historical prints from the Foules Academy of Arts showing Glasgow in the late eighteenth century were copied for purposes of illustration.

One of the most important stages in Macdonell's life concerned his involvement with the Glengarry Fencibles. A good deal of information concerning the foundation of the Regiment, some of its activity in Ireland and the events following its disbanding in 1802 is contained in the Blairs and Preshome Letters. However, in this case, there is also much to be found in the Scottish Record Office and the Public Record Office. Of the two Archives, that in Edinburgh houses the greater amount. It contains letters from Alexander Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry, the Colonel

of the Regiment, mostly to Henry Dundas, and a whole section (GD51) devoted to Irish affairs. In this latter group are important letters from Lord Cornwallis to Henry Dundas concerning the insurrection in Ireland, its causes and possible solution. Of interest also are the letters from various persons concerning the formation of fencible regiments throughout the Highlands.

The Public Record Office in Kew houses the War Office records. These were searched for references to the Glengarry Fencible Regiment or to any of its officers. Of the records which have survived in this repository are the official letters of appointment, some dealing with rates of pay and those concerning embarkation and disembarkation. In addition, some information was found concerning the Regiments´s activity while it was stationed on the Island of Guernsey.

One of the most interesting events, and one which had repercussions on Macdonell later, seems to have occurred while the Regiment was on Guernsey. This incident concerned Glengarry and a possible Court-Martial. No evidence or reference to the event was found in any of the military documents which survive in the various archival collections.

The Melville Mss. housed in the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh provided little information on Macdonell but did hold documentation supporting the characterization of Glengarry as unpredictible and at times

irrational. Mention is made to the future Bishop of Upper Canada as "cousin" and "friend" to the Chief who was then ailing in Vienna.

The only documentation concerning Macdonell's arrest, trial, imprisonment and release from the Fleet Prison was to be found in the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane. The summary of the case, which would have revealed more of the details, the names of the protagonists and those who paid the damages and costs assessed, although listed in the Court of Common Pleas journal, could not be located in their Archives. Because Macdonell, along with the "Major", had been arrested in Dublin, the documents held in the State Paper Office, Dublin, were searched, but the effort proved fruitless. The collections held in the National Library in Dublin and the State Paper Office contain nothing relevant to the Glengarry Regiment nor the arrest of two of its officers for failure to pay a bond.

Current issues of newspapers, both Scottish and Irish, were searched in the hope that additional information concerning the Glengarry Regiment, its activities and whereabouts, could be ascertained. Only the Edinburgh Advertiser contained communiques from Ireland which referred to the Regiment. This, unfortunately, renders much of the praise attributed to the Regiment somewhat tarnished, as the source is one-sided. In fact, some of the letters written by Macdonell to his cousin Margaret Fraser and the accounts

written for the Advertiser are so similar, that one suspects he might have been the author of the letters sent to the Edinburgh newspaper. It is unfortunate that the Irish newspapers, several of which have survived from a period prior to the Rebellion, all lacked numbers which might have provided some information for the years 1798-1802.

Of all the printed sources, J.F.S. Gordon's Ecclesiastical Chronicle for Scotland, Vol.IV [Scotochronicon] is the most important for an understanding of the work, effectiveness and place of the contemporary Catholic Church. Its narrative is based entirely on ecclesiastical letters and records, many of which now comprise the Blairs collection. Of particular interest in this volume is James Augustine Stothert's biography of Bishop George Hay, pp.14-453.

Maurice Taylor's The Scots College in Spain was especially useful for its description of the curriculum, daily routines and general preparation of clergy for the Scottish Mission. Many of the articles written for the Innes Review, the journal of the Scottish Catholic Historical Association, concern the struggle, renaissance and growth of the Catholic Church in Scotland in the eighteenth century. This period is covered in greater depth by Christine Johnson in her Developments in the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland

1789-1829, although that referring to the foundation of the Glasgow mission is, for lack of supporting material, still rather meagre.

For a physical, economic and societal description of the late eighteenth-century Highlands, a number of pertinent works were consulted. Two of these: I.F.Grant's Everyday Life on an Old Highland Farm and M.I.Adam's "Causes of the Highland Emigration: 1783-1803", are rightly considered benchmark sources, and proved useful.

Both James Cleland and James Denholm provide contemporary accounts of Glasgow as a city emerging in commercial importance, with a planned urban expansion and system of improvements. Cleland and Robert Cowan provide statistics relevant to the population which in the period concerned was growing rapidly but was still within tolerable limits.

John Prebble's works are colorful and are, for the most part, adequate in content but they lack documentation. His work on the Highland Regiments, Mutiny, was useful as a quick reference source but his delineation of characters and interpretation of events had to be considered with caution. A work of superior scholarship but of limited use, because of its concentration on the politics and events of 1798 in Ireland, was Thomas Pakenham's The Year of Liberty.

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GD128
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