
CHAPTER X

THE GLENGARRY SETTLEMENTS

THE COMING OF THE SCOTTISH LOYALISTS

*True to Empire and to King,
They deemed all loss of wealth and lands
As little, as a petty thing
Weighed in the scales. Heroic bands,
Devoted, patriot, wandered forth
To build new Empire in the North.*

“The Loyalists.”

UNLIKE that of Pictou, the Glengarry settlement in Upper Canada was a great military community. It had its origin in the disbanded Scottish regiments composed largely of members of the great clan Macdonald or Macdonell, a name, as history shows, famous in Canadian as well as in British annals.

Claiming a common descent from the stock of the Lords of the Isles, the several branches of the clan spell the name differently. The Macdonells of Antrim and those of Glengarry are of the same stock as Lord Macdonald of Slate in Antrim and the late Sir John A. Macdonald.

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The history of the Glengarry settlement is, in a sense, a history of the Highland regiments and of the great Jacobite wars. These Macdonells were of an undaunted stock of fighting men, who strove to the last for the Stuart cause. But since then they have been as steadfastly true to the House of Hanover, which now represents the Royal House of Stuart.

When Pitt, in 1757, started out to raise the Highland regiments, as one writer says, "this call to arms was responded to by the clans; and battalion on battalion was raised in the remotest parts of the Highlands among those who, a few years before, were devoted to, and too long had followed, the race of Stuart. Frasers, Macdonalds, Camerons, McLeans, McPhersons, and others of disaffected names and clans were enrolled."

All the world knows how they soon, at Quebec and Aboukir, added fame to Britain. Lord Chatham, in his famous eulogy of their regiments, said: "I sought for merit wherever it could be found. It is my boast that I was the first Minister who looked for it and found it in the mountains of the North. I called it forth and drew into your service a hardy and intrepid race of men—men who, left by your jealousy, became a prey to the artifices of your enemies, and had gone nigh to have overturned the State in the war before last. These men in the last war were brought to combat on your side; they served with fidelity, as they fought with valour, and conquered for you in every part of the world." Of these, this account has to

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do with those who emigrated to the Crown colonies in America, and who proved their worth and loyalty on this continent, as their brother Scots had done in other parts of the Empire and the world.

Since then the name of Macdonald has continued famous in Canada and elsewhere. One has only to mention Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir William Macdonald, John Sandfield Macdonald, Bishop Macdonell, and a host of others of this clan, in the State, the Church, the Bench, and many other walks in life in Canada, to show how one at least of the great Highland clans has made its name synonymous with the best life of this country.

The history of the Glengarry settlement is similar to that of Pictou, in that it has to be dealt with under several heads, those of the first and second and third immigrations. The first immigration was the United Loyalist one, under Sir John Johnson, from Tryon County, New York. It was on a small scale, but the second and third were great movements, the third being the coming of a whole regiment of Highland soldiers in 1802.

One of the most important of all the United Empire Loyalist settlements was that of Glengarry, which contributed during the wars more fighting men in proportion to its population than any other portion of the province.

But to explain its settlement we must go back to the Old Land and the old days, as no people or generation lives merely in the present. We are a part and parcel of the past, and are much what our forefathers made us ere we were born. To

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understand and explain the Scotsman in Canada we must know of the Scotsman in the Old World. And as he was inspired there, so his children and children's children will be led here.

Among the leading Jacobites were the sept of the Macdonald clan, the Macdonells of Glengarry. They had followed Montrose and Claverhouse. In 1715 they joined the Earl of Mar, and in 1745 were staunch adherents of Prince Charles Edward. They met defeat, and paid the penalty like men.

And yielded, indignant, their necks to the blow,
Their homes to the flame, and their lands to the foe.

After the disarming Acts and the abolition of the feudal system, thousands of Highlanders were forced to emigrate.

Among these were several gentlemen of the clan Macdonell of the Glengarry branch—Aberchalder, Leek, Collachie, and Scothouse, so designated from their several estates. These, collecting a number of their people together, emigrated to America, and settled on tracts of land in what was then called Tryon County, in the beautiful valley of the Mohawk in the Province of New York.

They had hoped, in crossing the ocean, to live in peace and make up for the disasters of fortune which the Jacobite wars had helped to cause in the Old World.

But their fate was destined to be otherwise; and it was not long ere they had to take up arms for George the Third, as they had for the Stuart cause. And once more for an ideal—the monarchy

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—they forsook all, and went forth into the northern Canadian wilderness to establish the foundation of a new Empire on this continent.

The man who was to lead them was Sir John Johnson, son of the famous Sir William Johnson, the friend and ally of the Redman. Sir William was from Ireland, and descended from a branch of the famous Lowland Scottish family of Johnson of the borders.

When the rebellion broke out in 1775 Sir John armed his retainers for the King, and his Scottish allies, who were Roman Catholics, took the side of their monarch against the rebels. It was not long before the Highlanders were denounced by the Continentals as Tories, and were commanded to deliver up their arms. This they appeared to do, but an attempt was made to seize Sir John Johnson and his friends and allies, the Highlanders. But, being warned in time, he escaped and made his way, after a hard march, to Canada, accompanied by many of his friends and associates, chief among whom were the Macdonnells and other Highland gentlemen and their clansmen who had followed his fortunes and had stood for the Empire.

On their arrival, Sir Guy Carleton issued a commission to Johnson to raise a fencible regiment from among the two hundred followers who had accompanied him from New York. This regiment was called "The King's Royal Regiment of New York." Among others the Highland gentlemen from Tryon County received commissions, and their men enlisted. The following is a list of the

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Scottish officers in this regiment, in Butler's Rangers, and in the 84th or Royal Highland Emigrant Regiment :—

King's Royal Regiment, N.Y.—1st Battalion.

Capt. Alexander Macdonell (Aberchalder).
Capt. Angus Macdonell (Ensign 60th Regt.).
Capt. John Macdonell (Scotas).
Capt. Archibald Macdonell (Leek).
Capt. Allan Macdonell (Leek).
Lieut. Hugh Macdonell (Aberchalder).
Ensign Miles Macdonell (Scotas).

King's Royal Regiment, N.Y.—2nd Battalion.

Capt. James Macdonell.
Lieut. Ronald Macdonell (Leek).

Butler's Rangers.

Captain John Macdonell (Aberchalder), Lieut. in 84th Regt.
1st Lieut. Alexander Macdonell (Collachie).
2nd Lieut. Chichester Macdonell (Aberchalder).

Seventy-first Regiment.

Lieut. Angus Macdonell.

Other Scottish gentlemen who held commissions in the King's Royal Regiment of New York were :—

Major James Gray.
Major John Ross.
Capt. S. Anderson.
Capt. John Munroe.
Capt. William Morrison.
Capt. Redford Crawford.
Lieut. Malcolm McMartin.
Lieut. Joseph Anderson.
Lieut. Jacob Farrand.
Lieut. Walter Sutherland.
Lieut. Hugh Munro.

Lieut. William Mackay.
Lieut. William Fraser.
Ensign Duncan Cameron.
Ensign John Mann.
Ensign Ebenezer Anderson.
Ensign Alexander McKenzie.
Ensign Samuel Mckay.
Ensign John Mackay.
Chaplains, the Rev. John Doty
and the Rev. John Stewart.
James Stewart, Surgeon's Mate.

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As will be seen by these lists, the Macdonells, who are in a list by themselves, are in the great majority.

The Royal Highland Emigrant Regiment, or the old 84th, was raised from the Highland emigrants then arriving in Canada, and Lieut.-Col. Allan McLean, of the 104th Regiment, was Commandant of the First Battalion, and Captain John Small was Commandant of the Second Battalion, raised from the discharged soldiers settled in Nova Scotia, who afterwards re-settled there.

A large proportion of the King's Royal Regiment of New York and the Royal Emigrants were of the Scottish stock.

The First Battalion of the Royal Emigrants settled in Canada. The following is a list of its officers in 1778 :—

Lieut.-Col. Allan MacLean ; Major Donald McDonald.

Captains : Wm. Dunbar, John Nairne, Alexander Fraser, George McDougall, Malcolm Fraser, Daniel Robertson, George Lewis.

Lieutenants : Neil McLean, John McLean, Lachlan McLean, David Cairns, Donald McKinnon, Ronald McDonald, John McDonell, Alexander Stratton, Hector McLean.

Ensigns : Ronald McDonald, Archibald Grant, David Smith, Archibald McDonald, John Pringle, Hector McLean.

Rev. John Bethune, Chaplain ; Ronald McDonald, Adjutant ; Lachlan McLean, Quartermaster ; James Davidson, Surgeon ; James Walker, Surgeon's Mate.

In 1778 this regiment was numbered as the 84th.

Though many of the United Empire Loyalists

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were of Scottish stock, yet Glengarry must be considered as the great centre of the Scottish Loyalists. The Empire Lists, which are only partially complete, show that the name Macdonell, or Macdonald, outranks in the numbers of its representatives any other United Empire name in the Province of Upper Canada. There were on the Lists the representatives of almost every Highland clan and Scottish name. Then there were many of the Highlanders who never registered their names. Bishop Macdonell, who came to Canada more than twenty years after the Loyalists, wrote that he had not been long in the province before he discovered that few or none among the earliest settlers had legal tenure of their properties, and it took him months' of hard labour to secure for the Highland emigrants of Stormont and Glengarry proper deeds for their lands.

Lord Dorchester's original United Empire List, which was only the nucleus of the Royalist immigration into Upper Canada, showed nearly six hundred Scottish names, of which 84 were Macdonells, 35 Grants, 28 Campbells, 27 Frasers, and 25 Camerons.

Of these Scottish Celtic settlers in early Canada, their enemies have striven to say that they had no mental qualifications to rank them with the early settlers of Massachusetts, Virginia, Maryland, and Connecticut; that long subjection to their Highland chiefs had paralysed those nobler qualities which make men desire freedom and progress. But their manner of conquering nature in their new home

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during the earlier years of pioneer life, the spirit they showed in repelling the foe in 1812 and 1837, give the lie to such a false estimate of the Glengarry, Stormont, and other Scottish settlers of Canada.

In the grave crisis of the summer of 1812, when the gallant Brock stood alone, when cowards and traitors had combined to make the holding of the young province for Britain almost impossible, who was it who stood loyally, as Brock himself said, but his loyal Glengarry men? And it was a Macdonell of the clan who died on the same field of glory while rallying his forces at the untimely death of his great general.

But they have evinced a host of other qualifications, mentally, morally, and physically, to show them to be the equal, if not the superior, of the members of any other community which ever settled on this continent. Almost supreme as has been the Scot in many parts of the great Republic to the South, it seems that there is somewhat in the very climate and austere seasons and natural environment of Canada that brings out the Scottish nature, as in his own dear homeland, at its very best, and blossoms, as nowhere else outside of the northern isle, the very flower of the Scottish personality. Where else has there developed a Lord Strathcona, a Sir John Alexander Macdonald, a Sandfield Macdonald, a Lyon McKenzie, an Oliver Mowat, a Principal Grant, a Sir William Dawson, a Bishop Strachan, a Bishop Macdonell, or a thousand other remarkable individualities, rugged

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scions of the Scottish stock, but Canadians of the Canadians, because this land of ours is so much of Scotland and Scotland so much a part of us? This individuality has been both the strength and curse of the Scottish race, and it is alike the curse of the Canadians, because we are too strong as individuals in our own conceit and will not band together for any cause—save a vulgar party one—and therefore, though we still are Grits or Tories, at least in name, we have ceased to be true patriots.

The early settlement of Glengarry developed slowly. The county of Glengarry, where the settlement was made, is the most easterly county of what was old Upper Canada, now Ontario, Alexandria, the centre of the county, being about halfway between the Ottawa and the St. Lawrence Rivers, and about fifty miles from Ottawa city. The neighbouring counties are Stormont, Dundas, and Prescott, where many of the early settlers found their homes, and most of them were soldiers and United Empire Loyalists of Scottish descent.

Cornwall was the great early county town for these districts, and a famous Scottish centre in old Upper Canada. Here Bishop Strachan, then plain John Strachan, taught his famous school; and near here, at Williamstown, the Rev. John Bethune founded the first Presbyterian Church in Upper Canada. Here, during the early pioneer days, the eighteenth century wore itself out, and early in the nineteenth came the third great influx of Scotsmen, with the disbanded regiment of the Glengarrys.

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The second immigration into the Glengarry community took place soon after the close of the Revolution.

The Rev. Alexander Macdonell brought out some five hundred colonists, who came chiefly from the Knokdart portion of the Glengarry estates in the Western Highlands. These Highlanders came and settled on land among their fellow-clansmen in the county of Glengarry. They sailed for America in the ship *McDonald*, Captain Robert Stevenson, from Greenock. She arrived in Quebec on September 7, 1786, and her reverend colonist and her 520 pioneers made their way up the St. Lawrence to the land which was to be their home.

Father Alexander Macdonald was one of the earliest Catholic missionaries, not French, in Upper Canada. He founded the parish of St. Raphael's, the pioneer parish of Upper Canada, and died at Lachine in 1803, aged about fifty-three years, after a long and faithful pastorate.

Mr. Macdonald, of Greenfield, who emigrated in 1792, also brought out emigrants who were of his clan. He was brother-in-law of Col. John Macdonald, the first Speaker of the Upper Canadian Assembly.

The county now became noted as a Scottish colony, and emigrants were attracted to it from all parts of Scotland; and among them came McPhersons from Badenoch and Camerons from Lochiel's country, who settled in Lancaster and Lochiel.

There is also a tradition that a Capt. Alexander

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McLeod, of the family of Moule, in 1793 chartered a vessel and brought from Glenelg in Scotland forty families, principally of McLeods, McIntoshes, McGillivrays, and McCuaigs. They arrived in Glengarry in 1794, and settled in the north of the county.

These were the principal Scottish immigrations into these settlements prior to the coming of the regiment in 1802.