



## FROM THE CHIEFTAIN

I would like to wish all members of the Society (and our extended family in the Clan) the compliments of the season. May you all enjoy a merry and holy Christmas, and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Colleen and I recently went to Brisbane so that I could attend the Annual St Andrews Day Dinner run by the Society of St Andrew of Scotland (Queensland) Ltd. We had decided to stay in Brisbane for the weekend following the dinner, just for a little relaxation. Sadly, this did not eventuate, as I had some sort of infection and was taken to hospital for an overnight stay, and was pumped full of antibiotics. I am now fully recovered, but it surely mucked up our plans.

On a happier note, I am able to announce that our Patron, Kathleen Moore, has been awarded a Celtic Honour by the Celtic Council Australia Queensland. Kathleen is now Duine Uasal (Honoured Person) and can use the post-nominal D.Ua. As this follows the recent award of the honour to Barrie Leslie, and my own award last year, it would appear that Clan Leslie here in Australia is being recognised as a real player in Scottish affairs.

I am truly looking forward to attending the Royal Edinburgh Tattoo in Melbourne in February. Colleen and I have been lucky enough to acquire places on a tour to Melbourne with a local tour company, which includes tickets to the Tattoo. We were able to see the Tattoo in Scotland several years ago, and are really excited about seeing this spectacular show in our own country.

Also on our list for the coming year, is a visit to the Celtic Festival in Glen Innes NSW at the end of April.

**Date Claimer:** I would like all society members to mark their calendars for the weekend of 15-16 October 2016. We are trying to organise a Clan Gathering on this weekend at Warwick. Our intention is to have visits and tours to places associated with Patrick Leslie and his brothers as

the focal points of the gathering. There will be more information coming out to advise you of the progress of this project. We are hoping to be able to put it together as an all inclusive package.

**Malcolm Leslie** Chieftain

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## A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF

This year has gone in a blur. Last time I looked it was February. Now it is Christmas, soon 2016. Our priority this year has been renovating a house in Dumfriesshire in South West Scotland. It started life as a row of three farm workers cottages. Then we took the middle one out – we have a picture of a digger in our drawing room – and made a large room through the middle. The views are sensational and we are looking forward to many happy parties there.

It was not a year of travelling overseas to Scottish events, but we did have a very happy reunion of cousins in Edinburgh. It seems that the only times that cousins normally get together is at weddings and funerals, so we decided to do something about that. We sat down 14 to supper, with a little history lesson to start with. The exciting thing for us was that those under 30 outnumbered those over 30 by two to one. One of the things that my father, and the founder of the Clan Leslie Society in America, were very keen on was getting young people interested and excited in our family and its history. These kind of events help enormously.

Next year, it is back on the road, in August at any rate. We are going to Fergus in Canada to attend – as Honoured Clan – the largest gathering of Scots outside Scotland. There are trips planned to the University of Guelph, a treasure trove of Scottish texts, and to the Niagara Falls, a place I have wanted to visit since a boy. It also turns out that my wife, Miranda, has a great, great, great grandfather who was the man in charge of the Great Lakes in the early 1800s.

We have not forgotten Australia or New Zealand either. Both are places that I am very fond of. Plus, of course, I have an Australian wife. Miranda's mother was called Osborne and born in Sydney, and her grandmother was an Appleton. We are definitely planning a trip, whether or not it will be next year, I cannot say at this point. Rest assured we absolutely want to, and will be there soon.

In the meantime, a very merry Christmas to you and a happy and successful New Year to Leslies everywhere.

Very best wishes

Alexander and Miranda Leslie  
Clan Chief

### **SITUATIONS VACANT**

The following situations are vacant and need enthusiastic Society members to volunteer to take them on:

- Editor, Grip Fast Down Under
- Membership Secretary
- Representative Victoria
- Representative New South Wales

The position of Treasurer has been filled on a temporary basis for some time, so a volunteer to take this job would also be welcome.

If anyone can see their way clear to make any of these positions their own, please contact the Commissioner/Chieftain

### **Historical Records of The Family of Leslie**

As we approach the beginning of a New Year, I feel that it is just as important to look back to where we have come from as it is to look forward to our future. Our Society has much to look forward to, and if we all try to encourage the younger generation to take part, we can only prosper. The past history of our Clan is long and illustrious, and I believe that knowledge of this past can and will inspire generations of Leslies yet to come.

In 1940, Russell Lesslie purchased a three volume set of books entitled "Historical Records of the Family of Leslie from 1067 to 1868-9" written by Colonel Charles Leslie K.H., 26<sup>th</sup> Baron of Balquhain. These volumes were later donated to the Society by Russell.

The following is part of the first chapter in Volume 1, and I hope it will rekindle memories in some, and a desire to learn more in others.

### **"Dynasta de Leslie**

#### **1. Bartholemew**

#### **Founder of the Family of Leslie**

According both to tradition and to Bishop Leslie in his *De Rebus Gestis Scotorum*, lib. vi, p.200, Romæ, 1578, Bartholemew or Bartolf, a noble Hungarian, the founder of the family of Leslie, came to Scotland in the train of Margaret, afterwards the Queen of Malcolm Canmore, in 1067.

Edgar Etheling, the brother of this noble lady, was the grandson of Edmund Ironside, King of England, being the son of Prince Edward, surnamed the Outlaw, by Agatha his wife, daughter of Henry II, Emperor of Germany. Edgar thus concentrated in his own person all the Anglo-Saxon claims to the crown of England. Excluded from his just right of succession, first by the usurpation of Harold, and afterwards by the conquest of William the Norman, in order to promote the happiness of the people, and, in accordance with the advice of his uncles, Edwin and Morcar, he abandoned his claims, and swore fealty to the conqueror at Berkhamstead 25<sup>th</sup> December 1066. William, anxious from motives of policy to conciliate the affections of his Anglo-Saxon subjects, and more especially to honour one whose claims might be dangerous to his power, took Edgar into great favour, and bestowed upon him an earldom with large possessions.

After completing his conquest, William found it necessary to revisit his native duchy. He returned to Normandy in 1067, in the spring of the year, and, partly to deprive insurrection in England of any chance of success, and partly to impress on his Norman subjects the due value of his success, he carried Edgar Etheling along with him to grace the pageantry of his triumph.

The English, however, did take advantage of William's absence to make some effort for freedom, and insurrections were made in various parts of the country. The suspicions of William, caused by these outbreaks, though veiled under the mask of apparent friendship, did not escape the notice of Edgar, who accordingly determined to flee the dangerous precincts of the Norman Court. He took shipping, in company with his mother Agatha, and his sisters Margaret and Christina, with the intention of returning to Hungary, the land of their birth. Stress of weather, however, drove

their vessel into the Firth of Forth at St. Margaret's Hope, Queensferry, where they were graciously received by Malcolm, King of Scotland, who was then residing in his palace at Dunfermline. This prince, struck with the beauty and

won by the accomplishments of the Princess Margaret, offered her his hand, and the offer was accepted. Having thus become the consort of an unpolished king, and the queen of a rude and barbarous people, Margaret so gained the esteem and affection of her husband, and used her power so well for the benefit of her adopted people, that they in their gratitude invested her with the qualities of a saint, by which appellation the good queen is still known in Scottish history ; and in memory of her welcome arrival in the country, the place where she first set foot on Scottish ground was named St. Margaret's Hope, and to this day it retains the name of Queensferry.

Among the noblemen who accompanied the Princess Agatha from Germany, and who, sharing her unsettled fortunes, faithfully attended her and her children until their arrival in Scotland, was a Hungarian, named Bartolf or Bartholomew, who was descended from an ancient and noble family in Hungary. Bartholomew was a man of acute genius and strong mind, very valiant, and possessed of great bodily strength-qualities which are always valuable in a rude age, and which recommended him to the favour of King Malcolm, who appointed him Governor of the Castle of Edinburgh, honoured him with the dignity of knighthood, and bestowed on him large grants of land in Fife, Angus, the Mearns, and Aberdeenshire. The circumstances of this grant are recorded in the following legend :-

Commencing his journey on horseback at Dunfermline, and proceeding northward, Bartholomew was promised by the king in hereditary right, all the land for a mile round any point where he should find it necessary to alight for the purpose of baiting or feeding his horse. First, he alighted at Fechil, now called Leslie, in Fife ; next at Innerlessad, in Angus ; the third time at Feskie, or Eskie, in the Mearns ; the fourth time at Cushnie, in Mar. His horse at last failed him at the place called Leslie in the Garioch. On his return to court, the king asked him where he had left his horse, and he replied, as some say-  
"At the lesse ley beside the mair."

or, as others give it-

Betwe a leesnse ley and a mair,"

My horse it tyrd and stopped there."

The king, finding, it is said, that the place suited well with his surname, answered in the same metrical style-

"Lord Lesley shalt thou be,  
And thy heirs after thee."

and he honourably fulfilled the terms of his promise.

Traditions generally arise in later times to account for prior facts, and though they may alter the accessories of events, yet the foundation on which they rest is not unfrequently found to be according to truth. All the places mentioned in this tradition did, at later dates, belong to the family of Leslie, as will be shown in the proper place. It is also beyond doubt that Bartholomew did obtain from the king a grant of the lands of Lesselyn in the Garioch, which long remained the patrimony of his successors. Three charters, now in possession of the Countess of Rothes, granted to Malcolm son of Bartolf, Norman son of Malcolm, and Norino son of Norman, place this fact beyond the reach of cavil.

Garioch and county of Aberdeen, was thus the earliest possession of the family of Leslie in Scotland. From it unquestionably the family derived its patronymic. As is the case of most of the old Scottish families, so here the family estate gave the cognomen to the family, and, as will be shown afterwards, not until the fifth generation did this family bend to the custom then becoming general, of assuming a surname, a fact which would seem to clear up all doubt that may exist as to the origin of the name of Leslie.

The present castle of Leslie, built, without doubt, on the site of an earlier stronghold, is situated on the banks of the river Gaudy, which runs at the back, or north-west side of the celebrated hill of Bennachie. In later times so numerous did the Leslies cluster round -this their ancestral domain that the circumstance is commemorated in a beautiful old song  
" Thick sit the Leslies on Gaudy side,  
On Gaudy side, on Gaudy side,  
At the back of Bennachie."

It may be proper here to give a description of the family arms. They are a field argent, traversed with a belt or girdle azure, in which are three buckles gules, supported on the dexter and sinister side by two griffins proper. The crest is a demi-griffin proper, having a scroll with the motto " Grip Fast." The origin of these arms is thus related by tradition :-

Bartholomew held the office of Lord Chamberlain to the Queen, and had the honour, according to the

primitive fashion of those times, of carrying the Queen on his own horse when she travelled. For ease a pad behind the Chamberlain was provided for the Queen, and, for safety, a belt buckled round his waist, supplied her with a stay in case of danger or uneasy motion. On one occasion, when both thus mounted were crossing a river, the Queen nearly fell from the horse. On this the Chamberlain in great anxiety, called out, "Grip fast," to which the Queen, doubtful of the strength of the buckle, replied, "Gin the buckle bide." To obviate the danger of the buckle giving way in future, two more buckles were forthwith added to the belt. And, in commemoration of the event, says the legend, Bartholomew got the above device for his family arms.

Bartholomew, the founder of the family of Leslie in Scotland, married, according to some authorities, one of the ladies of honour to Queen Margaret. According to others, King Malcolm gave him to wife one of his own sisters, and this account is fortified by the best authorities. The Rev. William Betham, in his *Genealogical Tables*, published in 1795, states that Bartholomew married a sister of King Malcolm Canmore; and in the *Genealogical Tree of the Royal Family of Scotland*, published 3d March 1792, by John Brown, Genealogist in Scotland to the Prince of Wales, and approved by the Lyon Office, we find it stated that, "Beatrix, daughter of King Duncan, and sister of Malcolm III. or Canmore, married Bartholomew, of whom all the Leslies in Scotland are descended." From this marriage have sprung the many noble, knightly, and gentle houses of the illustrious name of Leslie. Many of these have risen to great splendour and rank."



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