

Clan Matheson Society

NEWS LETTER No. 20

The Annual General Meeting and Dinner will be held at The Quality Inn, opposite Victoria Main Line & Underground Station (by Bus Terminus) at 6.30 p.m. for 7.00 p.m. on Saturday 30th October, 1971, at £1.30 (+ 10%) each. Please inform Secretary if able to attend—pay there. Nominations for Committee Membership should be received by this date.

The Reverend J. Ure Stewart, President of the Clan Matheson section of Canada, has now completed his book on the descendants of John and Ann (McLeod) Matheson of Dornoch, Sutherlandshire. This is a 180 page book, loose leaf for additional information, and contains a brief history of Clan Matheson, 2 samples of the tartan, Coat of Arms, specially marked map of Scotland, photographs of persons and groups etc., brief account of over 1,700 individuals from over 500 families, references, etc., and is in a red hard back cover at \$6 per copy. Enquiries for same should be made to their Secretary—Mrs. E. M. Cox, 72 Obermeyer Drive, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.

We were pleased to hear of the success of Kevin Ross Docherty, son of Mrs. Isobel Docherty (nee Matheson), in gaining his B.A. degree at McGill University, Canada. Several Mathesons have graduated from McGill University over the years.

A few of our members were able to attend the Richmond Highland Gathering on Saturday, June 12th this year where better weather was enjoyed by the later date.

The Caledonian Schools are holding a Scottish Gathering and Sale at the London Scottish Drill Hall, 59 Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1., on Friday and Saturday 19th/20th November, 1971. It is hoped as many of our local members as possible will be able to attend this ever popular occasion.

We are pleased to welcome the following new members since the last issue of the News Letter:—

W. D. Matheson, "Braehead", Gower Street, Brora,
Sutherland. AM

Miss Julia Matheson, 35 Yorke Road, Croxley Green,
Rickmansworth, Herts. LM

W. H. Matheson, 34 Rue de Rocher, Paris 8, France.
AM (Pending)

Revd. J. Ure Stewart, Box 401, Seaforth, Ontario,
Canada. HM

Mrs. E. M. Cox, 72 Obermeyer Drive, Kitchener, Ontario,
Canada. AM

John Davie-Mathieson, 8 Hill Close, Charlbury, Oxon.
LM

Mrs. E. (McLeod) Matheson, 6 Meadow Avenue, Scar-
borough, Ontario, Canada. AM (Pending)

The following alterations should be made to the membership list:—

Transferred to Life Membership—

Dr. B. Matheson, Essex.

E. J. M. Matheson, Saudi Arabia.

H. J. P. Matheson, London W.5.

Read JAMES Monteith Matheson, Glasgow, instead of John.

A few dozen remaining Clan Matheson Greetings Cards are now being sold off at 60p per dozen (70p per dozen overseas). These cards can be used for Christmas, New Year, and many other special occasions at any time. Application for same should be made to the Membership Secretary (or any Committee Member).

The early history of some clans is often obscure through lack of written records, but perhaps the poems of Ossian may afford some clue as to our own clan's early origins, in which it is related how one Colmar MacMahon of Ireland assisted in the Scottish and Irish battles of the Gaelic foke lore hero Fingal. Some mention is said to have been made of this in the Iomaire Manuscript of Roderick Matheson.

It is known that at some time in the 11th and 13th Centuries AD certain Irish personages sailed North from Ireland to seek the assistance of the Norwegian ships, mainly in repelling influxes of peoples from the Southern parts of Scotland into Ireland, and a MacMahon is thought to have sailed into Loch Alsh to have offered his assistance to the Scottish King, mainly in repelling Norwegian incursions on this part of the coast, and for this was awarded with lands in the Loch Alsh district. This may have been

during the time of the Norwegian raids of Magnus Barefoot (ccAD1098) or a period between the reigns of Kings MacAlpin and Alexander I (843 - 1124 AD). Could somewhat similar incidents have occurred twice within 3 centuries ?

Perhaps early Irish history may help to throw some light on these early events, for it begins to be fairly well recorded in many respects from about the time of Cormac MacAirt (AD275 - 300), somewhere at about which time the Fionna was founded and from which came the celebrated Fingal, (Finn), of whom there is such scanty historical evidence, and whose son Ossian related the many tales of war and valour of the various tribes of Ireland and Scotland.

The Irish clan system began to emerge historically in the 11th Century AD, and Clan MacMahon, along with other Irish clans, can be traced back to earlier origins than this period.

The spelling of names from these early times often differed considerably, before they were Anglicised from the Gaelic (and even since in some cases), but perhaps somewhere among these obscure facts and names and dates there may lie some approximate indication of our own clan origins in Scotland.

R. J. MATHESON (Secretary)