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Clan Matheson Society

NEWSLETTER NO 45 OCT. 1990

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Chief of the Clan :
Major Sir Torquhil Matheson of Matheson,
Baronet of Lochalsh, D.L.

Price to non-members £1 or local equivalent

THE CHIEF'S MESSAGE.

Duirinish, September 1990.

Another year has passed quickly during which has seen the emergence of a number of clan newsletters on a territorial basis. In the U.S.A. there is the "Matheson Times" issued privately from time to time by Mac Matheson of 363 South Alvaro, Mesa, Arizona which seems to concentrate on the descendants of Alexander Matheson of Pitfure, Lairg, Sutherland, born 17 Jan 1778. A superb, illustrated volume entitled "The Matheson Clan" is in my possession. In it is recorded all the genealogy from Alexander to the year of publication in 1974. Therein is the supposition that this family is related to the Shiness family, which might well be so, but records of Shiness pre-1745 are vague, and at present no link can be confirmed.

Mac mentions another, which I have not seen, "The Matheson Family News" alias "The Matheson Mirror" issued by Maxwell MacMaster of 930 S. Monaco, Box 11337, Denver, Colorado. It would be interesting to know which Matheson family this serves. However, another correspondent in the United States has recently informed me that "The Matheson Mirror" is of no genealogical value to the Clan, and should be avoided.

Lyman Matheson, Hon Sec of the U.S. branch of The Clan Matheson Society, has recently published his first branch newsletter "Fac et Spera", which caters for all the known Clan branches, families or individuals of the Clan throughout the States.

In Nova Scotia, Glen Matheson, R.R.1, Debert, N.S. issues an occasional newsletter on behalf of the Nova Scotia branch of the Clan Society which tends to deal with Sutherland Mathesons whose descendants are well represented in the Maritimes.

Ailsa Matheson and her husband Gordon of Takapuna, New Zealand, have just started to produce their cheerful newsletter, which will no doubt grow in size as the New Zealand Society becomes more established.

Finally, there is this newsletter which is international, producing information on the past and present with as much accuracy as possible. If I see an item in any of the above which should be repeated, I hope that the producers will not mind if I do, as it is in the interest of all members of the Clan that as much information as possible should be made available to everyone.

Unfortunately I see a number of genealogies which include erroneous excerpts copied from one clan tartan book or another. The latest example has been spotted by Neil Franklynn Matheson of Stratford, Ontario, in "Scottish Clans and Tartans" by Neil Grant. Therein is stated "...two merchant princes, James Matheson and his nephew Alexander. They belonged to the Mathesons of Shiness: Alexander's father, however, married into the Lochalsh Mathesons". Fact is that Alexander and his father, John, were Lochalsh Mathesons, and John married Margaret of Shiness, sister of James. I now know the source of the quotation that John Matheson of Bennetsfield was a "hero" of Culloden, which word does not appear in "The History of the Mathesons". Even the clan map produced over the names of two deceased Heralds of The Lord Lyon's Court gives incorrectly the Chief's motto as "Fac et Spero". And in one Commonwealth Archive I have seen inaccurate clan information which cannot be dumped as it had been gifted. No doubt other clans suffer likewise.

In conclusion, I would suggest to anyone writing their family history which may go back so many generations, to get a knowledgeable kinsman to read it through before finally going to print. I know this from my own experience over the past year when I have been updating my own family history and that of Shiness as we are intermarried. I have found numerous errors and omissions in the History of the Mathesons (1900); and I have asked a number of my cousins to check the facts.

Although this message is being written in the peace and quiet of Lochalsh in the beginning of September, it brings to you from my family the Seasonal Greetings associated with the end of December. Serena and I look forward to seeing a great many of you in 1991.

Torquhil Matheson of Matheson.

RODERICK MATHESON.

CALIFORNIA PIONEER, EDUCATOR AND CIVIL WAR HERO.

by Charles Mathieson Otstot.

One of the things I have done this past year since becoming the US Branch Genealogist has been to search the National Archives military pension files for Mathesons. There are some 48 files (various spellings) and most relate to service during the American Civil War (1861-65). I plan to look at each of these, in time, for information of Matheson genealogical interest.

One of the first files I searched was that of Roderick N. Matheson, Colonel of the 32nd New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment, who died of wounds received at the Battle for South Mountain in War. His pension and service files show that he was actually from California... and that his remains had been shipped back to California for burial at a time when such was done by ship and across the Isthmus of Panama. It has been an interesting adventure discovering



RODERICK MATHESON.

who this person was, and I think you will find this biographic sketch of Roderick Matheson's life fascinating!

Roderick N(icol?) Matheson was born on 28 May 1824 in Inverness-shire, the son of Thomas and Jane (Nicol) Matheson. His parents had married in Killearnan, Ross & Cromarty on 14 Jun 1819. His father, Thomas was born about 1795 (his age in the 1860 census was 65), and his mother, Jane Nicol (described in the marriage register as "servant") was born about 1787 (her age in the 1860 census being 73). There was also an older sister, Elspeth Catherine born at Milltown, Ross & Cromarty. These events are recorded in the Scottish Parish Registers. I have not been able to tie Thomas Matheson into a Matheson genealogy.

The family emigrated to America in 1840 when Roderick was fifteen. His father became a businessman in New York City. On 31 Dec 1844 Rod married Maria Antoinette Seaman at the Green Street Methodist Church in New York City. Nettie, as she was known, was born about 1828, the daughter of Obediah and Mary (Fowler) Seaman of Putnam Valley in Westchester County, New York. The Seamans were an old Quaker family that may have arrived in America before the Revolution.

The newlyweds moved to Cleveland, Ohio where Rod sold real estate. A daughter, Emma was born and died there in 1844-5. At this time they also had a son who died early. The family soon returned to New York City where Rod associated with a large importing firm, but then became a teacher.

Rod was stricken with gold fever when gold was discovered in California. In January 1849 he sailed in the vessel "Pacific" by way of Cape Horn for California. His letters written to Nettie while on this voyage make very interesting reading. He was a natural observer, and his descriptions of shipboard life and about ports of call in Rio and Lima are wonderful in their detail and color. Before he arrived in San Francisco in August 1849, he had faced a near-mutiny, becalmed seas and near-shipwreck. The Healdsburg (California) Museum and Historical Society is publishing these letters in its "Russian River Recorder". Nettie was pregnant when Rod left, and a son, Roderick, Junior was born in 1849.

Rod stayed in the gold fields only a short time, and then settled in the young and wild town of San Francisco. The 1850 Federal Census for San Francisco has been destroyed, but Nettie noted in her pension application that the family lived at that time on the north-west corner of Washington and Leavenworth Streets. This is in the Nob Hill section of the city. Rod's native talents soon brought him prominence and he was active in a number of projects that shaped the future of the area. He helped organise a training school, the Mechanic's Institute of San Francisco, and became its President. In 1852 he was elected Comptroller of San Francisco. He was an active member of the fire department and a founder of the Vigilant Engine Company 9. And, he was a member of the Marion Rifles, a local militia unit.

Early in 1853, Nettie and young Roderick left New York to rejoin Rod in San Francisco.

In 1854, Rod was commissioned a General of Division in the Mexican Army and was the Resident Commissioner of Mexico in San Francisco. He contributed greatly to good relations between the United States and Mexico. He still held this commission at the time of his death.

In 1855, Rod, by now 31 years of age, moved the family to Healdsburg in Sonoma County some 70 miles north of San Francisco in the heart of what is now the California wine country. He purchased 300 acres (later increased to 1000 acres) east of the town and proceeded to cultivate it successfully. This farm was then known as the Sotoyome Ranch.

The Mathesons had three more children born in Healdsburg: Maria, junior (to be known as Nina) on 12 Aug 1855; Frank in September 1857 (who died at nine months on 5 Jun 1858); and George in 1860.

In addition to farming, Rod was instrumental in founding Healdsburg's first school, then called "The Russian River Institute". Rod donated some of the land for the school and found time to teach. In 1859, he headed a group of citizens who took over the school and renamed it "The Agricultural and Mechanical University of California". Rod also taught in this school and became its Principal. The school has continued under various names to the present time.

A major street in Healdsburg is Matheson Street. It runs from the town center to where the original Matheson homestead stood.

In the 1860 Federal Census of Healdsburg, Rod reported that he was 36, had been born in Scotland, and was a school teacher. He recorded \$7000 in real estate (one of the highest in Sonoma County) and \$1260 in personal property. Maria was 32 and had been born in New York. Three children ("all born in California") were listed: Roderick Jr, age 11; Maria Jr, age 4; and "not named" (George) age nine months. Rod's parents, Thomas and Jane Matheson, ages 65 and 73, lived with the family. They had two servants: William Patterson, age 16 and born in Louisiana; and Mary Bradley, age 23 and born in Ireland.

Rod was also active in local politics as a member of the Free Soil Party. Because of this association he was invited to Washington, D.C. in January 1861 for the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln. Rod hoped to gain a political appointment in California and looked forward to this trip with great expectations. In Washington, however, he became embroiled in the fever of the times. Political appointments were set aside as the call for military volunteers was raised. As Rod wrote to Nettie: "Lincoln is President and the South promises to secede, what is to be the consequence God only knows!".

Rod was in New York when the Civil War broke out. He took a leading role in organising the 32nd New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment, and was elected the regiment's commanding officer. The unit was formed at Staten Island, New York on 31 May 1861, and recruited men having a Californian connection. Its battle flag carried the seal of the State of California; and it would be known commonly as the "First Californian Regiment".

The 32nd New York moved to Washington and encamped just south of Alexandria, Virginia to train and help in the defense of the capital. It saw its first combat at the Battle of Bull Run on 21 July 1861. On the eve of that battle, Colonel Matheson had walked to a hill overlooking the army's encampment and told Nettie of his thoughts:

"The moon was full and shot her beams aslant through the foliage of the forest, giving a dark shadowy and uncertain outline. The camp fires burned low giving a dull glare, but the light of the moon and fire revealed long rows of stocked arms and bundles, or what we knew to be men, lying by the side of them. The camp of 30,000 men slept. Had it been a valley of dry bones, the quiet could not have been more profound and not more aptly could the question be propounded, "Can these live" ... Here were men sleeping, fathers, sons, brothers, ... Yet, these were to go forth in an hour or two to be engaged in deadly combat, hundreds before the moon rose again must be in eternity; yet, the uncertainty of who it should be made each one sleep in hope."

The 32nd New York was part of the brigade responsible for protecting the rear of the Union Army at Centreville. Most of the day they listened to the distant sound of battle, but in the afternoon the regiment was ordered toward Little Rocky Run to cover the Union retreat from flanking Confederate cavalry. The cavalry charge did

occur and the regiment fought it off, achieving what was the only Union victory of the day. Then the regiment, too, began a retreat to Alexandria. It was the last Union unit to return to camp. It marched in good order the day after the battle. It had lost none killed and only several slightly wounded. When all the Generals had left the battle field, the regiment elected Rod the General pro tem. Rod wrote to Nettie that the regiment had been commended by the President and by the Army Commander. These words from a letter written to Nettie just after the battle show another view of this forceful and goal-orientated Scot:

"I am back from the battle with my reputation for a good soldier being established. I am held in high estimation by my men and officers, by all the other regiments around. Nettie, my love, what would I do or give if you were by my side, that I could look into your face and get your approving smile for trying to fight and sustain Your Country and now mine. Do you not think I may, by and by, rank as an American? ... I am now writing in my tent and it is past midnight; all my men are asleep - warriors and non-combatants."

The 32nd New York supported the defense of Washington until March 1862; and was involved in a skirmish with Confederate forces at Springfield Station in 1861. In September 1861, a correspondent from the San Francisco "Alta" visited the regiment and reported they drilled like veterans, and had a happy faculty of getting along well, and were just a fine body of men. They seemed to live off the fat of the land, had a theatrical company and a band of seranaders, and seemed to have more fun going on in their encampment than all other units together. Still, when on duty the troops maintained a strict discipline. Certainly all of this reflects the kind of commander Rod Matheson was.

In the spring of 1862, the regiment moved south with the Union Army of the Potomac toward Richmond, Virginia, the capital of the Confederacy. It passed through Manassass and Falmouth, and on to the east for a drive that would be known as the Peninsula Campaign. The regiment was in the Siege of Yorktown in early May 1862; and fought in most of the actions during the "Seven Days Before Richmond" in late June and July: Gaines Mill, White Oak Swamp, Charles City Crossroads and Malvern Gill. This was a time of terrible fighting and of personal hardship in a hot, insect infested swampy area. Colonel Matheson himself suffered from a diarrhoea but never left the field. The campaign failed to capture Richmond. The regiment bivouacked at Harrison's Landing until late August; then marched north and into works at Centreville to cover the retreat of the army from the Second Battle of Bull Run.

Roderick Matheson was recommended for promotion to Brigadier General for his coolness, courage and discretion throughout the Seven Days Battle, but this had not happened yet when in the early fall of 1862, the 32nd New York crossed the Potomac River to check the Confederate General Lee's Maryland Campaign. On 14 Sep 1862 in the preliminary skirmishing at Crampton's Gap on South Mountain (just before the major Battle of Antietam) Colonel Matheson was hit by a mini-ball in his right thigh while leading the charge up the mountain. He was evacuated to a field hospital at Bucketsville, Maryland. "The wound was not considered serious, the leg was not amputated and Colonel Matheson did not himself, nor did his friends apprehend any danger." But, on 1 Oct he began to bleed severely. He was still in generally poor health from the Peninsula Campaign. He died on 2 Oct 1862 at 5.30 pm at age 38. The Union lost "one of its best Colonels" wrote his Corps Commander, General W.B. Franklin. And, there was quite a fuss raised about how and why he was allowed to die.

The remains of Colonel Roderick Matheson were taken to Washington and then to New York. He lay in state in the The Governor's Room of City Hall until his imposing military funeral on 9 Oct at the Green Street Methodist Church where he and Nettie had been married some

18 years before. Such notables as General John C. Freemont (explorer, first US senator from California, and in 1862 Commander of the Mountain Department of West Virginia), C. K. Garrison (Mayor of San Francisco in 1853), George Wilkes (publisher of "Spirit of the Times"), Eugene Kelly (founder of Murphy Grant & Co, and the chief dry goods firm in San Francisco), and General John S. Ellis were among the pall bearers. California's senior US Senator, Alexander McDougall, an old friend of Rod's from San Francisco, presided.

After the services, the remains were transported to San Francisco by steamer and across the Isthmus of Panama. The California newspapers followed the daily progress of the ships. In California, his funeral, other services and burial were a most solemn and imposing pageant. His body arrived in San Francisco on the steamer "Sonora" at dusk on 6 Nov. It was met by the 1st California Guard. The torchlight procession into town was led by the slow and measured tread of the Healdsburg band whose funeral marches were mournful on the night air. The body lay in state at Platt's Hall so that Rod's friends could have a last glance at the "gallant and heroic" son of Scotland and California. The news article about this noted that his familiar face appeared considerably emaciated. The funeral was attended by many notables, His Excellency Leland Stanford (at the time Governor of California), the Honourable Ogden Hoffman (judge in the California land grant hearings), William Ralston (founder of the Bank of California), and F. M. Pixley (City Attorney for San Francisco).

After the services, the body was taken to Healdsburg for burial. The Petaluma Guard, the Emmet Rifles and the Sotoyome Guards (of which Rod had been a member) provided a Guard of Honor for the cortege as it sailed across San Francisco Bay on the steamer "Petaluma", and then made its way (with appropriate services and addresses) through Petaluma and Santa Rosa to Healdsburg. At Oak Mound Cemetery "one of California's noblest heroes" was laid to rest on 9 Nov 1862. "amid the universal sorrow of the community."

"He sleeps his last sleep,
He has fought his last battle.
No sound can wake him to glory again!"

Roderick Matheson was a talented and energetic Scot who rose to wealth and prominence in his adopted California at a relatively young age. No doubt we should have heard much more of him had he not been swept up in the winds of the Civil War. Instead, physical remembrances of Colonel Matheson are few: a shaded obelisk in Oak Mound Cemetery and a Healdsburg street named for one forgotten. Recently, the Healdsburg Museum has begun to publish his letters. His sons died young and his only daughter, Nina had children. Her descendants today still reside in Healdsburg and nearby areas.

After Rod's death, Nettie was provided a hero widow's reward by the State of California and she applied for a Federal Widow's pension. In 1864 she began to receive a \$30 a month stipend, which was retroactive to the date of Rod's death. This pension was increased by \$2 a month in 1866 to cover young Nina and George. It was again increased in 1875 and continued until her death on 28 Feb 1884 at age 56. She is buried at Oak Mound Cemetery.

Note: The author acknowledges assistance from the Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society with data from their "Russian River Recorder".

CANADA

Hon Sec: Joel R. Matheson, Q.C,
PO Box 488, Halifax, N.S. B3J 2 R8

1990 has been an especially active year with many gatherings

being held in all parts of Nova Scotia, being reported on under separate headings.

The venue proposed for the 1991 International Clan Gathering in Ontario turned out to be unsuitable due to lack of accommodation facilities. Rather than disappoint those who have made plans, it has been decided to hold local gatherings in Nova Scotia and in Prince Edward Island, where 1991 will be the "Year of the Scot".

The decision has also been taken to participate in the International Clan Gathering at Montreal, P.Q. in August 1992 which will include a Clan Parliament and Dinner; and involvement with other activities. The Clan Matheson Gatherings in both years will take place in the first week of August and the Chief and Serena intend to attend.

Joel Matheson will be holding a meeting with the Nova Scotia Presidents and Art Matheson of Prince Edward Island, in late September 90, to decide the 1991 programme, and it is suggested that anyone overseas from Canada communicates with him to save time.

NOVA SCOTIA.

Hon Sec: Ena Matheson, PO Box 24, Falmouth, N.S., B0P 1L0.

The AGM was held at the Pipers' Picnic, Earlton on 4 Aug 90. The Chairman, Roger Matheson and the Hon Sec, Beverly Matheson, relinquished their appointments. They were thanked profusely by all assembled for their energetic leadership in their term of office. Al, Beverly's husband, and Ena Matheson were elected to take their respective places. It was decided that the bursary for a student attending the Gaelic College of Celtic Arts and Crafts, Cape Breton, for 1990 would be donated in memory of the late John Matheson. It was moved by Al Matheson, and seconded by Verna Matheson, and carried, that a \$100 bursary be given in 1991, to be decided at the time if it is to be donated in memory of anyone.

On 30 Sep 90 there will be a service taken by the Rev. Donald Sutherland, with the Rev Glen Matheson taking part, at the New Lairg Pioneer Cemetery, at 3 pm.

The Clan picnic was held on 26 Aug at Vaughan and Donna Matheson's cottage on Shortt's Lake, just outside Truro. About 50 clanspeople attended ranging from one month to ninety, i.e. Alexander, Younger of Glenholme, to James Ernest of Glengarry, who told the youngster "You have a lot of catching up to do!". It was a glorious and really happy family day, celebrating birth, 40 years of marriage, and longevity with an "Anniversary Cake" baked by Donna.

CAPE BRETON.

Hon Sec: Brenda Cochrane.

Regular meetings have taken place. Donald Matheson gave an interesting talk on the Highlights of his trip to Bermuda. Fruit baskets were sent to Annie MacDonald and Annie Matheson when they were in hospital.

It has been decided to increase the Clan Matheson Society in Cape Breton Memorial Fund to \$1000. The annual prize would be awarded to a student studying the Gaelic Language in Cape Breton, rotating schools. It was voted that Jessie Morrison should present the first prize of \$100 at the closing classes at the Gaelic College at St Anne's on Friday 10th August, with all members present. This year's award is given in memory of the members and friends who have passed away since the Society was formed in 1979.

A Service will be held at Ephraim Scott Presbyterian Church, South Haven on 17 Sep 1990 where that memorable international clan service was held in 1979.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

Hon Sec: Arthur Matheson,
341 Granville St, Apt 25B, Summerside, Prince Edward Island.

Art reports that 1991 will be the "Year of the Scott" on P.E.I., and that he is planning a special Clan Matheson event during the Chief's visit.

UNITED STATES.

Hon Sec: Lyman W. Matheson,
12126 Rhett Drive, Houston, Texas, 77024.

The U.S. Branch has issued its first branch newsletter, titled "Fac et Spera", as an attempt to provide more interest to members. It has been well received. Any U.S. members who have interesting items of family history, etc which could be shared by all, are asked to send details to Lyman at the above address.

The Eastern Zone, under the leadership of Alec and John Aakesson and Charles Mathieson Otstot and other helpers provided the Clan tent and marched in the Parade of Clans at the Virginia Scottish Games in July. Saturday was brilliant and crowded, but Sunday was as cold and nasty as Saturday was nice. Whilst the Matheson element sought refuge in their tent, they watched a group of traditional Highlanders with no cover, wrapped in their plaids, sitting smoking around their spluttering fires!

From the Central Zone, Jean Fries reports that those wishing to research their families in Lewis should write to Uig Historical Museum, Lochcroistean Old School, Uig Isle of Lewis. They are as much interested in receiving information as to giving it.

Mountain and Western Zones have been busy finding potential new members.



Lyman and Phyllis Matheson

**THE HEATHER AND THISTLE SOCIETY
OF HOUSTON, TEXAS.**
by Lyman W. Matheson.

My term of office as Chieftain of the Heather and Thistle Society for 1989-90 has expired. I enjoyed the work and what the organisation was accomplishing to further Scottish traditions in this area. For example, the 37th Annual Burns Supper and Ball which 675 Scots attended in formal Scottish attire (kilts) had two speakers of note from Scotland. The main speaker was the Scottish author James A. Mackay of Dumfries, whose mother was a Matheson, and as I said in my introduction of him during the program, "that is enough to get him into heaven"! He recently appeared on the U.S. national ABC TV network program "Good Morning America", which for that week originated from Scotland. He has written over 100 books on various subjects and is an outstanding Burns scholar. James proposed the toast to "The Immortal Memory".

The other speaker was Dr Maurice Lindsay, C.B.E. of Dumbarton, a leading Burns author. He has written many Burns books, among which is the Burns Encyclopedia, now in its 3rd edition and it is recognised around the world as the Bible concerning Robert Burns. It was he who addressed the Haggis in superb style.

A third guest from Scotland for the occasion was Bert Sommers, a native of Aberdeen, who in 1979 won both the British and World Drum Major Competitions. He was outstanding, as you might well imagine, as he served as guest Drum Major for our Burns evening, leading the Houston Highlanders Pipe Band and Drum Band of approximately 20 in number.

Also on our program was Mr John Garner, C.M.G., Her Majesty's Consul General, who proposed the Health of the President of the United States.

After an excellent supper, the evening progressed with music, songs, dancing, Scottish Country Dancing and Pipes and Drums.

NEW ZEALAND.

Hon Sec: Mrs Ailsa Matheson, Flat 1, 254 Lake Rd. Takapuna.

The New Zealand Branch has now entered its second year, full of activity and enthusiasm, and is planning to find more members. John and Monica Kidd continue with their valuable researches. A fine genealogy entitled "The Matheson Saga" (referred to elsewhere in this Newsletter) has been published. Various small gatherings have taken place when there has been a great display of family spirit.

Only one thing has cast a spell of sadness, and that is the continued serious ill health of the Reverend Roy Matheson, the architect of the New Zealand Society. He and Joan, through their world travels, are well known to very many of the Clan who send them their prayerful sympathy and best wishes.

As a post script, and with acknowledgement to Joy Weeds of Howick

"An old anchor, recovered by skin divers at Matheson Bay near Leigh, has been identified as a mooring anchor used in the bay's shipbuilding days over 100 years ago.

In 1857, when Captains Duncan and Angus Matheson arrived from Nova Scotia in the 107 ton brigantine "SPRAY", they set up as ship builders in Matheson Bay. They soon established a reputation as expert shipwrights and at Matheson Bay built five ships - schooners and brigantines. As the ships were built, they were

launched into the bay and held at anchor for rigging. About 100 feet of chain was recovered with the anchor which was last used in 1882. Although a little weather-beaten after so long in the sea, it was still bright when found

Captain Duncan was lost when he fell from a spar on the last schooner he built, the "THREE CHEERS", and from that time on the ship-building business declined.

Interested residents have ensured the preservation of the anchor, and it is mounted on the headland overlooking the site of the original launching ramp in Matheson Bay."



Matheson Picnic, New Zealand, Feb. 1990
Don Scott, John Kidd, Ailsa Matheson, Rae Scott and Gwen Smith.

COMMENTS RELATING TO MATHESON EMIGRANTS TO CANADA, LISTED ON P.7 IN NEWSLETTER No 44, OCT 1989.

1. by Leslie R. Matheson, Broadview Heights, Ohio.

ALEXANDER (No 1) was from Kinvaid. The Kildonan Church records list marriages and children of several Mathesons from this locale but I have no information regarding any of them.

"WIDOW"

Matheson was Jean Polson, born 1754, who married Hugh Matheson. They lived at Cayn but the family moved to Aultbrechaky between 1794 and 1803, probably after Hugh's death. Hugh died prior to 1813. In a letter to Angus dated 7 March 1815, Lord Selkirk referred to Angus's mother as "Widow Matheson", Aultbrechaky. She was on a list he took in 1813 as a potential emigrant to his new colony. He listed her family as a daughter, Helen and John Polson. John was her step-grandson (see Katherine below).

Other children of Hugh Matheson and Jean Polson are :-

ANGUS

"Nestor" (No 1) was a Corporal in the Army at Tain. He was an agent for Lord Selkirk, arranging for settlers to emigrate to the Red River Settlement (Winnipeg). He married CHRISTIAN Matheson (No 1) at Red River. They were the forebears of the late Anne Matheson Henderson, the Red River

JANET

Historian, of Winnipeg, among others. married John Sutherland at Kildonan Church on 9 Sep 1803 so is not listed among the Mathesons. Their son, "Big John" married Alexander's daughter Katherine.

ALEXANDER (No 3) married Ann Matheson of Gartymore, Loth Parish, in Kildonan Church on 9 Feb 1804. They lived at Balnavaliach. Their son "Little Angus" was my Great Grandfather. He married Isabel Livingston at Red River 20 Sep 1836. they moved to Upper Scotch Grove, Delaware County, Iowa in 1837. Another son, John "Bushy" married Catherine Pritchard and they were the parents of Samuel Pritchard Matheson, the first native born Canadian to become Archbishop of Prince Rupert's Land and Primate of Canada.

KATHERINE married Alexander Polson at Kildonan Church 19 Dec 1804, so she is not on the Matheson list. Alexander's son from a previous marriage apparently went to live with his step-grandmother. He was John "Pagee" Matheson who was Grandfather (?) of the late Norman Matheson of Winnipeg. Alexander's sister, Ann Polson, married a JOHN MATHESON (probably No 3) at Red River.

JOHN

(No 4), born 12 Nov 1792, was a member of the contingent that emigrated in 1813. This group was put ashore at Fort Churchill, 150 miles north of their destination at York Factory. They spent the winter camped along the banks of the Churchill River. Miraculously most of them survived. In April 1814, they made their way overland amid deep snow and blinding blizzards. There most of them joined other new arrivals and they began the 800 mile journey by land and water to the Red River Settlement. John remained at York Factory and married Barbara Sutherland 22 July 1814. They travelled to Red River, probably with the 1815 contingent which brought the rest of John's family. They stayed at Red River for about two months before leaving for Ontario. I have no further information about them.

2. by Neil Franklynn Matheson, Stratford, Ontario.

DOUGALD. (Dugald) was the eldest son of four and one daughter of Murdoch Matheson by his second wife, Anne Finlayson. Murdoch was of the Family of Dugald Og in the History of The Mathesons, and was killed in the celebrated incident with a Revenue Cutter (p.108) in 1815, and v. NL 41 for a description of the affair. In addition to the daughter Catherine, Dougald's family consisted of Murdoch, Donald, John, Flora, Daniel and Kenneth.

CRIMOGAN.

* The representer of the Donald MacAlaster Family (HOM 1900, pp 96-100) has joined the Society. He is Colonel Donald Matheson, late Royal Army Medical Corps and is XI in succession from Murdoch Buidhe. He has one son, and two daughters. This brings yet another family tree up to date.

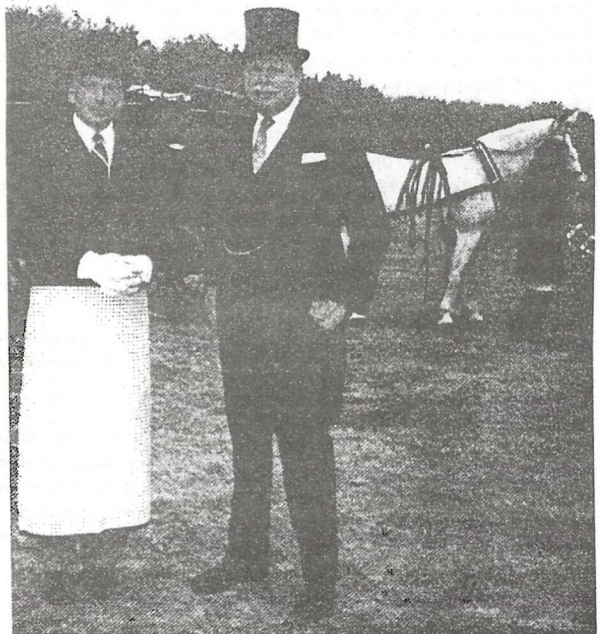
* In January this year Edmond Matheson received a letter from

Huibert Cornelis Mathysse of Ermelo in the Netherlands, accompanied by his genealogy. He is the descended from Corporal Charles Matheson of Captain Cunningham's Company, 1st Regiment of Scots in the Netherlands. Charles married a Dutch girl, Margaretha West in Bergen op Zoom on 28 Oct 1733, and produced a son Johannes Matheson, born 4 Sep 1737. Johannes changed his name to Matthyssen, the "n" being dropped in the next generation. Huibert and his wife, Francina Margaretha, have a son and a daughter. They visited Scotland in August, and signed the visitors' book at Duirinish as "Matheson"! Research is under way to discover about the 1st Scots Regiment.

* Frank and Mona Matheson, 14 Carlton Street, Pt Vernon, 4655, Australia wonder whether any of the Mathesons in Australia would get together to form an Australian Branch of the Society. Perhaps an existing member would undertake trying to enrol more members which would make a branch formation a viable affair. At present there are about 45 members with their families throughout the country, whose addresses Frank has.

* Our wide ranging reporter, MacTittle of Tattle, observed Charles and Bonnie Matheson of The Plains, Virginia, driving a four-in-hand "drag" around Windsor Great Park on a lovely evening in early June on the occasion of the annual drive of the Coaching Club of Great Britain, of which Charles is a member. About a dozen coaches took part in a spectacular event. Amongst Charles's guests, perched aloft, were the Chief and Serena. The drive terminated at Ascot Race Course, where a splendid dinner party rounded off the evening in one of the Ascot Authority's restaurants.

* The following week MacTittle espied a mini-gathering of Mathesons in, of all the unlikely places, the Royal Box, amongst whom were Ronald Matheson, one time Convener of the Society; Charles and Bonnie Matheson; Colonel Richard and Mrs Rosie Mayfield, daughter of Colonel Donald Matheson, representer of the Donald MacAlaster Family (HOM pp. 96-102); Sir Philip and Lady Duncombe, a great-grandson of Sir Alexander Matheson; and at least seven other unmistakable Matheson men and women, with their spouses, who declined to identify themselves. Such modesty is seldom encountered! Co dha bhios MacMhathain gu math, mar bi e dha fein?



Charles Matheson with the Chief.

* Wayne Matheson, PO Box 745, Invercargill, New Zealand has sent an excellently produced genealogy entitled "The Matheson Saga" written by Alice C. (Matheson) McKenzie, Wayne's great-aunt. They are the descendants of Donald (Mathewson) Matheson and his wife Sophia Gall whom he married in 1756. Their children were born in Rathen, near Fraserburgh in Aberdeenshire. The family firm of J. Matheson & Co Ltd, now located at Kennington, Southland, was started in 1888, and Wayne is now Managing Director. The booklet is well illustrated with portraits, and with biographies and anecdotes.

* Loretta Matheson, 6065 E. Akron St, Meza, Arizona has had a busy summer celebrating the golden Anniversary of her sister being a nun and taking her on a trip to Anchorage, Alaska. In the autumn, Loretta is off to Europe: in fact, she is in orbit!

* The Queen has appointed the Chief to be Clerk of the Cheque and Adjutant of Her Majesty's Body Guard of The Honourable Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms with effect from 2 Oct 90. The Honourable Corps was raised in 1509 by King Henry VIII. The Clerk of the Cheque is responsible for summoning of the Gentlemen-at-Arms to duties, and general administration. He receives a Silver Stick of Office from the Queen on appointment. The Chief's brother Fergus is also a Gentleman-at-Arms, as is their cousin, Philip Duncombe.

* Mrs Gwen Matheson Smith of Bribie Island, Queensland, was able to attend the New Zealand Clan picnic in February of this year. Being of Erbusaig background, she was delighted to meet Gordon Matheson of Takapuna, who is also descended from that attractive sea-shore village to the north of Kyle of Lochalsh.

BOOK REVIEW.

"The Medieval Castles of Skye and Lochalsh"
by Roger Miket & David L. Roberts

Maclean Press, Aird Bhearnasdail, Portree, Isle of Skye.

ISBN 0 9516022 0 9. Price £7.95 plus postage.
Card covers. 95 pages.

This is such an outstanding book that we felt that it should be noticed in the Newsletter. All ten castles (Eilan Donan is technically in Kintail) described must have played their part in the history of the Clan at some time, and both the text and the illustrations almost bring them back to life. Roger Miket is the Museums Officer for the district and the book is really accurate and well researched; and it contains interesting anecdotes and legends. It is very easy to read and full of fascinating pictures.

S.M.F.M.

OBITUARIES.

We regret to record the following deaths, and wish to express our sincere sympathy to their relatives:

* Mrs Marion Matheson Green of Whitewater, Wisconsin, on 25 Jul 1989 one month short of her 93rd birthday. An enthusiastic supporter who attended the 1979 Gathering at Baddeck.

* Mrs Catherine Matheson Gilbert, 94, of Mt Vernon, Washington.

* The Duke of Richmond and Gordon on 2 Nov 89, the husband of Duchess Elizabeth, a cousin of the late Colonel Bertram

Matheson of Matheson, M.C.. The Duke's home was at Goodwood, famous for horse racing. He was a celebrated motor racing driver, introducing motor racing to Goodwood after the war. He also flew his own aircraft, and was a keen photographer and painter. They had been married 61 years.

* Mrs Elnora Matheson Swanson, aged 86, of Lebanon, Oregon.

* Mrs Winifred Inderwick of Perth, Ontario, on 6 Jan 1990. Win was a leading person in Perth, and was mainly responsible for the restoration of the house of Senator Roderick Matheson (1793- 1873) and for the establishment of the museum therein. For her services to the Clan, she was made an honorary member of the Society in 1979.

* Dr Louise Alice Matheson, widow of Norman Matheson, on 13 Jan 1990, at Leamington Spa. She was formerly MOH of Staines. In the 1960s, Norman and Louise hosted a very enjoyable Garden Party at their home at Virginia Water, which was one of the first Clan Society events after its establishment.

* Lorne A. "Maddy" Matheson, of Boulder, Colorado on 16 Jan 90, aged 84. Of Canadian origin, he became a naturalised American citizen. He was a brilliant scientist who helped to give the world the Saran Wrap, and, during World War II, he was involved with the vital development of synthetic rubber. After the war he became involved with Project Apple and the development of nuclear weapons. He was an environmentalist who understood that scientists could do amazing things, which could be manipulated for good or ill. He was a superb person and a great family man.

* Mr John Matheson, Huskisson, Jarvis Bay, New South Wales, and his wife, Noelene, who both died in January 1990. John was the brother of Miss Anne Matheson, O.B.E., of London, W.C.1. John was a keen golfer and cricketer, and played in the St George's team with the late Sir Don Bradman. He was also a keen fisherman, and was well known on TV and Radio as "Shnapper Jack".

* Mr Kendon Robert Matheson, in Feb 90, a son of Robert and Sophia Matheson, Dartmouth, and cousin of Glen Matheson, Debert, N.S.. He was 23 and an accountant in Vancouver.

* Mr Kenneth Duncan Matheson, aged 83, in April 90. He was the father of Roger Matheson, East River St Mary's, N.S. He had been a coal mining official, and was in insurance sales. An avid gardener, fisherman and hunter.

* Mrs Elma Matheson wife of Iain Matheson of Balvraid, Sutherland on 26 July 1990, aged 85. They had been married for 57 happy years. Those attending the Dunkeld Gathering in 1988 will remember Iain and Elma who presented the Matheson Targe to the Chief. Elma was born in Glasgow, being educated at Glasgow High School. For many years she was involved with charitable work in Edinburgh, and was well liked by everyone. Her funeral service at Dornoch Cathedral on 1 Aug was largely attended.

ALISTER MacRUARI AND HIS GREY DOG.

by Serena Matheson of Matheson.

This is another story of the earliest Mathesons for the next generation.

About the begining of the fifteenth century the Chief of the Mathesons was Alister MacRuari. His wife was the daughter of the Chief of the MacIntoshes and the two families were great friends. They had two little boys called John and Donald and a big grey dog called Broddam Glas. He was a famous deer hunting dog, and the Earl of Sutherland asked to borrow him. Alister agreed at once, but Broddam Glas had always been trained to come home to Lochalsh, and he didn't want to work for anyone else. He soon managed to get away, and took himself right back home.

The Earl of Sutherland sent a man to look for him. When this man got to Lochalsh and found Alister, there was Broddam Glas lying at his master's feet. Alister said "I would have given a loan of the Broddam Glas, but I would not part with him. He has returned of his own free will, and he had better stay".

The Earl was a very proud man. He was very angry with this message, and he took armed followers to harass the Matheson lands as a punishment. When Alister heard that they were on the way, he gathered as many of the Clan together as he could at Dail Achaid da Thearnaidh (The Field of Two Descents) where the Mathesons always assembled when going to battle. There weren't as many of them as he would have liked, but they marched up Glen Uddalan till they came in sight of the Sutherland men who were encamped on a hill in the Braes of Poll n'Tairib (Braes of the Bull's Pool). This hill is still called Cnoc nan Cattach, or The Sutherland Hill. Alister slipped out of sight behind the opposite hill, and this one is called Cnoc MhicRuairi. He was able to surprise the enemy next morning, and there was a great battle in the low ground between the hills. Both sides fought bravely and the battle might have gone either way. Alister began to be a bit worried. Suddenly something caught his attention, and over the hill more men appeared. It was his father-in-law, the MacIntosh chief, with reinforcements. He had arrived in the nick of time, and the Sutherlands turned and fled.

A lot of them were killed when they started to run away, and among the casualties was the Earl himself. Those that did escape were in such a hurry that they threw their big two-handed swords and knives and their targes and their plaids into a nearby loch so that they could run faster. I expect they are still there. Certainly the loch is still called Lochan-na-h-Ullaidh or the Loch of the Treasure.

After it was all over, they buried the Earl of Sutherland beside the river at a place called Lub-a-Mhorair (the Earl's Curve). Alister was really sorry that he had been killed in the battle, and very worried that there would be big trouble about it. There was!

A few years later, in 1427, King James I of Scotland came to Inverness and asked all the most important chiefs (including Alister MacRuairi) to come and meet him. There had been a lot of fighting in the North about the succession of the Earl of Ross, whose sister was married to Kenneth MacKenzie of Kintail, and Alister had probably been involved in it. King James thought so, anyway. Now that Alister was responsible for the death of the Earl of Sutherland, he was accused before the King of being a man of the worst character. I am sorry to say that your grandfather of many generations ago was taken prisoner and marched off to Edinburgh where he had his head cut off.

Next newsletter I will tell you what happened to his two sons, and about the wicked step-father that Alister's widow married.

A FAMILY REUNITED. by Monica Kidd, Papatoetoe, New Zealand.

Two wide-flung branches of a Math(i)eson family have been reunited through the medium of the Clan Society.

The story begins with James Mathieson, born to Alexander Mathieson and his wife Agnes Coldwells in 1784 in Midcalder, Midlothian. In 1810 James married Jessie Law, and several children were born to them. Three of the sons married, then emigrated: James to Canada, and John and Alexander to New Zealand. James then dropped the "i" from his surname, but the other two let it remain.

Recently, a gt-gt-grandson of James, Alex Matheson of Basalt, Colorado, read about the New Zealand branch of the Clan Matheson Society in Newsletter No 44 and wrote to Ailsa Matheson,

hoping that she might be able to give him information about the New Zealand side of the family. Ailsa passed the letter on to the genealogists John and Monica Kidd, who were able to send Alex much data extracted from the New Zealand Electoral Rolls and Cemetery Transcriptions.

Monica also put a "Query" in the "N.Z. Genealogist" for contact with descendants of the brothers. Among the answers was one from Mrs Shirley Stevens, a member of the Clan Society. She is a gt-granddaughter of John Mathieson, and has researched his tree very thoroughly. His papers and personal diary have been deposited in the Hocken Library in Dunedin. Mrs Stevens has a copy of a letter written by James in Canada in 1857 to his brother John.

John was the founder of the first Co-operative Company in New Zealand. His wife made cheese. Her story is to be included in the "Dictionary of New Zealand Biography", due to be published this year.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S HIGHLAND JOURNALS. by the Editor

Readers are probably aware that Queen Victoria did a tour of the Highlands in the Autumn of 1872, and that she kept a diary of events, places visited and people she met. She travelled by train, and then by horse transport from various stations. The following is gleaned from her Highland Journals, which have been published.

On Friday, September 6, 1872, the Queen, with her entourage, left Balmoral Castle at half-past nine for Aberdeen Station, whence she travelled to Inverness via Huntly, Keith and Elgin. "We passed Culloden, and the moor where that bloody battle, the recollection of which I cannot bear, was fought". There was a ten minute halt outside Inverness station at half-past three. The train then proceeded to Golspie. "At twenty to four we reached Dingwall, where there were Volunteers, as indeed there were everywhere, and where another address was presented and also flowers. Sir James Matheson, Lord Lieutenant of the County, was named to me, also the Vice Lieutenant; and some young ladies gave Beatrice nosegays. The position of Dingwall, in a glen with hills rising above it, is extremely pretty, and reminds me of a village in Switzerland". They arrived at Bonar Bridge where the train stopped, and the Duke of Sutherland, who had driven the engine all the way from Inverness, came to the Queen's carriage to welcome her at the boundary of his territory. The train eventually reached Golspie Station at six o'clock. The Queen, with her hosts and entourage then proceeded to Dunrobin Castle. Sir James was created Baronet of the Lews in 1850. He had no son, so the Baronetcy died with him in 1879. He was the uncle of Alexander Matheson of Ardrross, M.P. who appears later in this narrative.

In 1877 the Queen made her celebrated visit to Loch Maree in Wester Ross. The party left Balmoral on Wednesday September 12 and their itinerary followed the same rail route as was taken in 1872, but at Dingwall the train took the line which terminated at Stromeferry. They arrived at Achnasheen at a quarter to five "where there are only a small station and two or three little cottages. We ladies got into the sociable (Brown and Cannon on the box), the two gentlemen and three maids following in the waggonette, and the other servants in "traps". The twenty miles drive from here, through a desolate, wild and perfectly uninhabited country, was beautiful, though unfortunately, we had heavy showers". They changed horses at the small inn at Kinlochewe, and arrived at the Loch Maree Hotel a little after seven.

Saturday was spent driving back to Kinlochewe, and taking the road to Upper Loch Torridon, where the Queen did some sketching. "An old man, very tottery, passed where I was sketching, and

I asked the Duchess of Roxburghe to speak to him; he seemed strange, said he had come from America, and was going to England, and thought Torridon very ugly! We walked along, the people came out to see us, and we went into a little merchant's shop, where we all bought some trifles - just a "shoppie" as old Edmondston's, and the poor man was so nervous he threw almost everything down. I got some very good comforters, two little woven woollen shawls, and a very nice cloak. We had spoken to a woman before, but she could not understand us, only knowing Gaelic, and had to ask another younger woman to help. A little farther off the road, and more on the slope of the hill, was a row of five or six wretched hovels, before which stood barelegged and very ill-clad children, and poor women literally squatting on the ground". The party returned to the hotel by nearly seven.

Sunday was spent walking, and reading Prayers as the nearest churches were at Kinlochewe or Gairloch. "People had been passing on foot as early as half-past seven to Gairloch". In the afternoon they rowed out to Eilan Maree to see the old grave-stones, and to hammer some copper coins into the old tree as an offering to Saint Maelruabh who died in Applecross in 722 AD.

On Monday morning the Queen was nearly eaten alive by midges. Later in the day another visit was made to the Kerry Falls which were not so spectacular as they had been in full spate the previous Friday. At Kerrie's Bridge the Queen met two hundred and fifty people who had crossed from Stornoway specially to see her. The Minister, Mr Greenfield, was presented to her, and the people sang "God save the Queen" with most loyal warmth.

The return to Balmoral took place on Tuesday, September 18. The Queen's party left the hotel at a quarter to nine on a wet misty morning with the scenery much obscured. "At a little before half-past eleven we reached Achnasheen, where Mr Matheson, M.P., (who is chairman of the railway company, and has property farther north) met us. Here we got into the train, and went without stopping to Dingwall. We reached Ballater at six. A very threatening evening."

Mr Matheson, M.P., was to become Sir Alexander, 1st Baronet of Lochalsh in 1882. He was Chairman of the Highland Railway Company, and was mainly responsible for persuading the various Highland lairds to allow the railway system to pass through their properties. His manuscript diary for the last ten years of his life has recently come to light, and his entries for 9, 12 and 18 September, 1877 are as follows:

"9th. Heard from Dougall that the Queen is going to Achnasheen on the 12th".

"12th. Fine. Went to Dingwall to valuation appeal court. At 3.37 joined the special train taking the Queen to Achnasheen. Returned with Dougall to Inverness and continued home by the 7.25 train, taking Mr Haggart to Ardross from Achnasheen."

"18 Sept. Left Ardross at 7.30 am for Dingwall. Went on from thence with Dougall to Achnasheen. Accompanied the Queen's suite from thence to Keith. Fine day, tho' it rained in the morning at Loch Maree. Did not rain at Duncraig (beyond Stromeferry, in Lochalsh). Everything went off well. Lunched at Keith at 3 and got home (Ardross) at 10 pm. Very tired."

It is interesting to note that Sir Alexander was 72 in 1877, and his diary shows that he thought nothing of walking 15 miles in a day in any weather inspecting crofts, schools and other estate affairs until he was nearly 80. He was regularly visiting his office in Matheson & Co in the City of London within a month of his death in July 1886 in his 82nd year.

CLAN MATHESON SOCIETY (U.K.) ACCOUNTS

Balance Sheet as at 30 June 1990

Assets

Balance at Bank	£369.97	
Deposit with Abbey National Bldg Society	£614.36	
Stock of Christmas Cards	1.45	£985.78

Represented by:-

Reserve Fund. - Life Members Subscriptions

Total as at 30 June 1990	£880
Received during the year	£45
Transfer to Ord. A \ C	£45

Surplus as at 30 June 1989	£156.31	
Deficit as at 30 June 1990	£50.53	£105.78
Surplus per Balance Sheet	£105.78	£985.78

Income and Expenditure Account

Annual Members Subscriptions	£ 28	
Life Members Subscriptions	45	
U.S. Share of Newsletter	114.80	
Canadian Do.	100.77	
Donations	1.50	
Building Society Interest	43.78	£333.85

Less:-

Cost of printing Newsletter	£275	
Postage of Newsletter & Sundries	109.38	£384.38
Deficit for year to 30 June 1990		£50.53

Audited and found correct

J. Moncrieff 22 Aug '90

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

* Helen Dow Matheson, daughter of Mr and Mrs Charles T. Matheson, of The Plains, Virginia, on the occasion of her marriage to Mr David Shelburne Hilliard of Oyster Bay, Long Island, New York. They were married at Grace Episcopal Church in The Plains on 20 Jan 90.

* Jamie Graham Matheson of Newlands, Glasgow, on his marriage to Miss Angela Douglas Thomson of Paisley, Renfrewshire at Paisley Abbey on 1 June 1990. Jamie is the son of Mrs Marjorie G. Matheson and the late Mr James M. Matheson.

* Alexander (Sandy) Matheson on the award of the O.B.E. in the Queen's Birthday Honours, after a great many years of public service. Sandy, a former Provost of the Burgh of Stornoway, has recently stood down as Convener of the Western Isles Council (Comhairle nan Eilean), an appointment which he has held for the past eight years. He continues to be a member of the Council.

* Bill and Norrie Hillier, Cape Breton, on the occasion of their Golden Wedding on 8 Sep 1990.

* Glen and Jeannie Matheson, Debert, N.S., on the birth of their son Alexander.

* David Hugh MacKay Matheson and his wife Ellen Kreger, Concord, Mass, on the birth of their son James MacKay

Matheson on 3 Jul 90. David is a son of the Very Reverend Dr and Mrs James Matheson, Husabost, Isle of Skye.

* Mrs Eleanor (Matheson) Harvey of 16 Dalmore Avenue, Claygate, Surrey on the occasion of her 99th birthday on 27 Jul 1990.

* Mrs Henrietta (Matheson) Robertson, Tarland House, Nairn, on her 81st birthday on 10 Aug 90.

* James Ernest Matheson, Glengarry, Nova Scotia, on his 90th birthday. On 25 Aug. Al, his son and Beverly, held a party of over 100 family and friends at their home in Lower Sackville, N.S.

* George and Eileen Matheson of Truro, N.S. on the occasion of their 40th wedding anniversary.

MATHESON SETTLERS IN THE CAROLINAS.

contributed by Charles Matheson Otstot.

The Genealogical Publishing Company of Baltimore, Maryland has issued another David Dobson book "Directory of Scots in the Carolinas, 1680-1830". Included are some fourteen Math(ies)ons:

1. ALEXANDER MATTHESON: Born in Scotland .1773. A merchant in Camden, South Carolina. Died on 1 May 1826. (Source: "Southern Chronicle" 13 May 1826.)

2. ALEXANDER MATHESON: Son of Murdoch Matheson, Lochalsh, Ross and Cromarty. A merchant in Carolina during the late 18th Century. (Source: History of the Mathesons.)

3. ALEXANDER MATHIESON: Son of Murdoch Mathieson and his wife Florence MacRae, Kintail, Wester Ross. Settled in Charleston during 1830. (Source: History of Clan McRae (Dingwall, 1899.)

Ed: Family of Attadale and Lochalsh. The three ALEXANDERS are one and the same person! Those of you who have a zeroxed copy of my HOM will be able to identify him as 502C1: his father Murdoch as 502C, both on p.65. Murdoch's father was Alexander (502) and younger brother to John (501) of Fernaig and 1st of Attadale. At the end of this contribution I have added a copy of an anonymous letter which I found a year ago in my Grandfather Sir Alexander's papers in Northamptonshire Record Office (Vaux 391), which is very revealing. It is probable that both Sir Alexander (526) and his uncle Sir James (1109) were assisting financially their relations who had suffered badly through the Civil War.

4. C. MATHESON: 54. Merchant. Born in Scotland. Catherine, 44. Born in South Carolina. R. H., 22. Student. Born South Carolina. Thomas, two months. Born South Carolina. Kershaw County, South Carolina. (Source: 1850 US Federal Census).

5. DANIEL MATHESON: Born in Invershire, Sutherland c. 1764. Tailor. Died at Ashville, Buncombe County, North Carolina 8 Jan 1812. (Source: "Mirror of the Times", 12 Feb 1812.)

6. DONALD MATHESON: Born in Ross-shire during 1811. Emigrated from Port Glasgow to Charleston, South Carolina in November 1825. Naturalised 17 Apr 1837 at Marlborough, South Carolina. (Source South Carolina Archives.)

7. DONALD MATHESON: Born during 1810, 4th son of John Matheson of Attadale and his wife Margaret. Emigrated to America during 1825. Settled in South Carolina. Married Christian McLeod in 1837. Father of Hugh, Walter, Alexander, Margaret, Mary, and Sarah. Died in 1890. (Source: HOM.)

Ed: Family of Attadale and Lochalsh. Both Donalds are one and the same, being 529 and third brother of Sir Alexander (526). Their father John is 521. There is no question that Donald was born in 1810. But I have three dates, one being 25 Feb 1810, recorded in Sir Alexander's handwriting in his diary; the second being 27 Apr 1810, recorded on an anonymous piece of paper with his brothers' and sisters' birthdays which I think is written by their mother Margaret (1111); the third, July 24 1810, on his gravestone in Holy Road Cemetery, near Blenheim in South Carolina.

W.W.Wannamaker III of Camden, South Carolina, a gt gt grandson of Donald, has a full genealogy of his descendants.

8. HUGH MATHESON: 32. Farmer. Rumsdale, Kildoran, Sutherland. Emigrated from Scotland with sister Katherine Matheson 16 and his wife and three children aged from eight to two to Wilmington, North Carolina on the Bachelor of Leith, April 1774. (Source: Public Record Office, London, T47.72.)

9. JAMES MATHESON: 38. Labourer. New Luce, Wigtonshire. Emigrated from Stranraer, Wigtonshire with his wife Jean McQuiston 27 and child Margaret 4 to North Carolina on the Jackie, Master J. Morris on 31 May 1775. (Source P.R.O. London, T47.12.)

10. JOHN MATHESON: Thornhill, Dumfries-shire. A student. Died in Manchester, South Carolina 9 Sep 1822.

11. JOHN MATTHIESON: Closeburn, Nithsdale, Dumfries-shire. Covenanter. Prisoner in Cannongate Tolbooth. Banished to Carolina on 19 Jun 1684. Transported from Leith by Robert Malloch, merchant burgess of Edinburgh, August 1684. (Source: Register of Privy Council of Scotland (Edinburgh Series)).

Ed: v. NL 38, p.8, similar details.

12. DUNCAN MATHIESON: Son of Donald Mathieson (1744-1845), miller at Fernaig. Settled in South Carolina. (Source: HOM.)

Ed: The Family of Dugald Og. v. p.108, HOM. Duncan is 345B; and Donald 345, whose younger brother was Murdoch (346), killed in the Revenue Cutter incident q.v. NL 41. Name should be Matheson.

13. DUNCAN MATHESON: 5th son of John Matheson and his wife Isabella, Achtahtorolan. A merchant in Carolina. Died in 1812. (Source: HOM.)

Ed: Family of John of Achtahtorolan, HOM pp. 87-93. Duncan is 438; John, his father is 412, commonly called John Og the Youngest. Isabella was a daughter of James Matheson (22), sixth son of Alexander Matheson (14), 1st of Bennetsfield and Chief.

14. RODERICK MATHESON: Son of Murdoch Matheson, Lochalsh, Ross and Cromarty. Emigrated to America. Settled in Carolina. Died during 1811. (Source: HOM.)

Ed: Roderick is 502C3, and was second brother to Alexander (502C1) above. Also see letter below.

Copy of the letter referred to in notes above with bracketed notes by the Editor:

"Charleston, March 9 1870.

"I have delayed longer than I should in answer to your letter of the 17 inst. The Matheson family living in this state came from Achmaddock Scotland. (Achmaddock, Lochalsh)

Alexander (502C1) the son of Murdock Matheson (502C) married Eliza Pratt in 1815 and died in 1825 leaving his wife and four children who are all still living. (Aged 52, born 1773/4)

Murdock Pratt Matheson (502C1a) the eldest, and of whom you enquire, was in business before the late (Civil) war but was unfortunate, losing everything he had. He is now supporting a wife and 3 children on a salary of \$600 per annum, as a clerk in the So. Car: Loan & Trust Co in this City. D. Alexander Churchie Matheson (502C1b) is living in Alabama, John P. Matheson (502C1c) the 3rd child is also living in Ala, in the town of Camden; Flora McRae Matheson (502C1d) married the Revd Wm Dana a highly esteemed Clergyman in this City.

Mrs Matheson, the Mother, lives in Charleston So Carolina and they are all in poor circumstances. Roderick P. Matheson (502C3), the brother of Alexander (502C1) died in So Carolina unmarried.

Farquhar (502C4) another brother died in Camden So Carolina unmarried. John Matheson (502C3) another brother came out to Carolina and returned to the Isle of Skie about the year 1825. Mary Matheson (502C5) a sister came to Nova Scotia & married McKrar upon leaving Scotland.

I should have said that John P. Matheson (502C1c) brother of Murdock P. (502C1a) is also married & with his brother Dr Alexander Matheson (502C1b) in Camden Alabama.

Murdock P. Matheson married in 1844 Eugenia I. Stoney and they have three children living. John Stoney, Flora McRae & Christopher Matheson unmarried, all of them.

Dr Alexander married Seabina Mathews & has children, all living but unmarried.

Mrs Dana (502C1d) has no children. There is an old family Bible in the family and if further information be needed, I should be pleased to obtain it for you."

Editor's Note: The day after the above was typed, I was in Portree and was shown an old MS Genealogy of the MacRae's of 1704, and added to from time to time. Therein this quotation "Florence, 4th child and only daughter of John of Conchra was married to a Matheson who carried her off from a feast. Their son, Alexander Matheson, came to South Carolina and married a daughter of Captain Pratt of Charleston, by whom he had three sons and a daughter."

"A Matheson" is Murdoch (502C), also known as Murdoch Ban. Captain Matheson of Dornie's MS states that they were married in 1766. There is no mention of being carried off from a feast in either HOM or The History of Clan Macrae (Rev A. Macrae, Dingwall 1899), though both agree with the marriage and children. Captain Matheson goes on to state "Murdoch Ban followed cattle dealing, then a lucrative business in the Highlands. He might have been a very rich man in his own country, were it not that he followed the example of the old Highlanders when they came into a town to call the vintner and bargain with him about the best cask of liquor in his cellar, and would not leave town till it was spent".

HOW TO JOIN THE SOCIETY

Membership of the Society is restricted to persons spelling their name Matheson or Mathieson or whose parents or one of their grandparents spelled their name similarly.

Persons who spell their name Matheison, Mathison or Matthewson will be considered for membership if they can establish the Highland origin of their family.

For members living in the UK or overseas (excluding North America and New Zealand), the annual subscription is £2 or £15 for life membership; applications for membership should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer at Dunkeld with the appropriate sterling cheque.

Applications for membership from persons living in New Zealand, Canada or the USA should be made to the Hon. Secretary in the country in which they live. The subscription rates are \$7.50 for annual membership and \$75 for life membership in both currencies concerned.

Annual subscriptions will become due on the first of January each year, but members joining after 30 June in any year will not become liable for a further subscription until the end of the following year.

Any person whose annual subscription is eighteen months in arrears will be deemed to have resigned from the Society. If he or she wishes to rejoin, application for membership will have to be made afresh.

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