Appendix 1: McPhee in Lochaber

The following chart attempts to explore the McPhee relationship with the great families of:

i.) MacDonalds Lords of the Isles, who in this 15th Century were beginning their decline.

ii.) Keppoch MacDonells of Lochaber, an offshoot of the MacDonalds.

iii.) Camerons, in the 15th Century still reaching towards their greatness.

We can say with certainty that the McPhee people in the 15th Century had aristocratic leaders and were long established in Lochaber.

After 1500 AD, the McPhee people who stayed in Lochaber were reliant on the good will of Cameron, Keppoch, MacDonald, and the newly arrived and highly influential Gordon of Huntly. To the first three of these the McPhees were related. Once they had even been noted for a while as being in ‘sword service’ to the MacIntosh, on the North side of the Spean. Probably they were related to them, here and there, over the years.

So then, after 1500, some McPhee or other, or his descendant, was partner in the vicissitudes, politics, religion and traumas of Lochaber and Scottish Clan history. Yes, a McPhee presence was there, and it was too involved and too connected with the dominant Clans to be swallowed up by them. Anyway, it looks as though their Lochaber McPhee DNA has come down to us. This is a wonderful thing, and how grateful we all are to Mr Roderick MacDuff for his expertise and his energy and his generosity in conducting the Macfie DNA study, and how proud are the Lochaber McPhees to be a found part of it.
McPhee of Lochaber, Scotland: down to today by DNA.

The McPhees have lived in Lochaber for centuries. Now that the DNA study for the Macfie Clan Society is progressing we can pull together a few threads from earlier times. This chart below is my suggested genealogy for Lochaber McPhees; for Glen Spean, Glen Pean, Glen Urquhart, Glendessary – where ever they lived.

- Bernard McPhee

McPhee of Glenspean was the leader of a powerful Lochaber Sept. He married a daughter of Nicholas Obeleon, of the Ross and McKenzie families.

McPhee of Glenspean in Lochaber who was Neil, 13th Chief of McPhee c.1420 – 1450. No evidence that McPhee came from anywhere else. McPhee's daughter married into Keppoch.

Angus McPhee of Glenpean (Burke's Peerage, Vol. 1, p.450, p.655)  
Angus named in battle of Inverlochy in 1431.

Donald  
14th Chief of McPhee. Earl Douglas MacPhee says he was Chief when MSS was written, 1450AD. Witness to several Charters.

Margaret McPhee  
Daughter of Neil McPhee married into Keppoch MacDonell of Lochaber.

FROM SECOND MARRIAGE – to Margaret Stewart:  a third son: Alexander Carrach 1st Keppoch 1380-1443, and first Lord of Lochaber. He had m. Mary, dtr of Earl of Lennox. He was grandson of the King of Scotland.

FROM SECOND MARRIAGE – to Margaret Stewart: a first son: Donald Dunnyveg of Islay  
Became 2nd Lord of the Isles. He was Grandson of the King of Scotland.

2nd Keppoch Angus of Fersit From 1443-78  
Married to Margaret, Neil McPhee's daughter. Margaret is the mother of all the MacDonells of Keppoch.

3rd Keppoch Donald MacAngus 1478-97. He married the daughter of Cameron of Lochiel.

Donald, Third Lord of the Isles, 10th Earl of Ross, MacDonalds of Sleat, Chief of Uist and Benbecula. Founder of the House of Lochalsh. (d.1449)  
Married to Miss McPhee. Their son was Celestine of Lochalsh, (Burke's Peerage Vol 1 p.450) whose brother Hugh of Sleat would be Lord of the Isles. Celestine died in 1473.  
Celestine's son Alexander was killed in 1497 on Oronsay Island by MacIain of Ardnamurchan. (MacIain's sister was married to a Malcolm McPhee of Colonsay)  
Celestine's daughter married Ewen Cameron, 13th Cameron Chief and a son of Mariott,of the Keppoch MacDonells, whose mother was Margaret McPhee (see box above).

Keppoch line continues in Lochaber down to and after Battle of Culloden 1746.

Male descendants of McPhee of Glenspean and McPhee of Glenpean can be identified by their almost identical DNA, indicating their having a common ancestor back to these McPhees of the 15th Century.

Daughter of McPhee of Glenpean. She became one of the four wives of Alexander, 3rd Lord of the Isles. (Burke's Peerage Vol. 1 p. 655)
This photo taken in Glen Roy, looking towards Ben Nevis.

This photo taken in Glen Dessary, looking further West from the Westerly end of Loch Arkaig.
This photo taken at the Catholic Cemetery of Cille Choirill shows on left the restored Chapel of the Captain of Clan Cameron
Appendix 2: McPhee and Keppoch in Lochaber

The Keppoch MacDonell Family Tree

Alexander ('Alastair Carrach') MacDonald, 1st of Keppoch (a 1431)
m. _ Macphee (daughter of _ Macphee of Glen Spean)

A. Donald MacDonald or MacDonell, 3rd of Keppoch (d 1466)
m. ?? Cameron (daughter of Donald Dhu Cameron, 11th Chief of Clan Cameron)
i. John MacDonald, 4th of Keppoch

B. Alastair Macdonald or Macdonell, 9th of Keppoch (d c1486-9)
m. ?? MacDonald (dau of Donald Gallow Macdonald, 3rd of Sleat)
i. Donald Glas Macdonald or Macdonell, 8th of Keppoch (d c1517)
m. _ Cameron (daughter of _ Cameron of Lochiel)
  a. Ronald Macdonald or Maclennan, 7th of Keppoch (d 1547)
m. _ MacIntosh (dau of _ MacIntosh of MacIntosh)
    (1) Alexander Bulloch Macdonald or Macdonell, 8th of Keppoch (d 1549)
    (2) Ronald Og Macdonald or Maclennan, 9th of Keppoch (d 1577)
m. ?? Stewart (dau of Duncan Stewart, son of Alex, 3rd of Appin)
      (A) Alastair 'Nan Glease' Macdonald, 10th of Keppoch (d c1640)
m. Janet Macdougall (dau of _ Macdougall of Lorn)
      (i) Ronald Og Macdonald (d c1643)
    (ii) Maclean of Douart
      m. _ Maclean of Douart
    (iii) Forrester (dau of _ Forrester of Kilbeggie)
      (a) Alastair Macdonald, 12th of Keppoch
      (b) other issue (d unmn) - Ronald (d 09.1663), daughter
    (iv) Archibald Macdonald, 14th of Keppoch (d c1688, 2nd son)
m. Mary MacMartin (dau of _ MacMartin of Letterfinlay)
      (i) Coll Macdonald, 15th of Keppoch (b c1670, d c1723)
m. Barbara Macdonald (dau of Sir Donald Macdonald, 3rd of Sleat)
      (A) Alastair Macdonald (Macdonell), 16th of Keppoch (d Colborne 16.04.1746)
          Alastair was succeeded as head of his clan by his illegitimate son Angus until his legitimate son Ronald came of age.
m. Jessie Stewart (dau of Robert Stewart, 8th of Appin)
      (i) Ronald Macdonald, 18th of Keppoch (d 1795-6, Colonel)
m. Sarah Corgill (dau of Thomas Corgill of Jamaila)
      (a) Richard Macdonald, 19th of Keppoch (d unm 1817)
      (b) Alexander Macdonald (d unm)
      (ii) Alastair Macdonald (d before 1815, Major)
m. Sarah Macdonald (dau of Donald Macdonald of Timadris) @1 below
      (a) Orchester Macdonald
          (1) 2 sons (d unm)
          (b) other issue (d unmn) - John, daughter (nun), daughter
      (iii) Anne Macdonald
          m. Gordon of Stirling (doctor)
      (iv) Clementine Macdonald (dsp)
m. _ Buchanan
m2. _ Macdonald of Dolness

Barbara Macdonald
m. (28.12.1757) Patrick Macdonald (d 13.06.1844, minister of Kilmore & Kilbride, "Father of the Church of Scotland")
m. (20.03.1764) Donald Macdonald @2 below
Their elder son became the 20th of Keppoch.

Katherine Macdonald
m. Ian Dubh Macdonald of Aberarder and Killenchaton

Jessie Macdonald
m. Alastair Macdonald of Tulloch-Crom

Charlotte Macdonald
m. (c1775) Alastair Macdonald of Garbog (son of Patrick Macdonald)
d (13.06.1844, minister of Kilmore & Kilbride, by his 1st wife, _ Mackintosh)
partner unknown

Angus Macdonell or Macdonald of Inisch, 17th of Keppoch (d after 1819)
m. Christina Macdonell or Macdonald (dau of Angus Macdonell or Macdonald of Achnancoichean) @3 below

(ii) Archibald Macdonald (Lt, Colonel, 2nd son)
m. _ Maclauchlan in Killiechan
  (i) Alastair Macdonald had issue (2 dau)
m. Mary Stewart (dau of Duncan Stewart, 9th of Achnancoine)
(ii) Angus Macdonald had issue
m. Mary Macdonell (dau of _ MacDonell of Morar)
  (ii) Elwin Macdonald had issue
m. Anne Hill

(b) Donald Macdonald
Donald Macdonald
m. Anne McDonald (b 20.03.1764, dau of Rev. P. McDonald by Barbara Macdonald) @2 above

Angus Macdonald, 10th of Keppoch (b 1800-1, d 28.02.1855) had issue:
m. (17.08.1835) Christina MacNab (b 1815-6, d 30.01.1906, dau of John MacNab of Sheraughart, Cantyre, etc.)

Ronald Macdonald (d unm)

Barbara Macdonald
m. Alastair Macdonald in Sherramore (d unm - Alastair (d young), Ronald, John, Coll)

Margaret Macdonald
m. Cameron of Erracht

Donald Macdonald of Tibraris (d 1746)
m. (2) Macdonald (dau of Macdonald of Killiechonate) (d unm)

Sarah Macdonald
m. Alastair Macdonald (Major) @1 above

Cecilia or Julia Macdonald (gaelic poetess)
m. Alexander Gordon of Cardell

Catherine Macdonald
m. Macpherson of Strathmaemie

other issue - Alastair Odharr (dsp), Angus (d unm)

m2. Macdonnell (dau of Ian Macdonnell of Glengarry)

Donald Gorm Macdonald ancestor of the family of Clianaig

Ronald na Diaich Macdonald (dsp)
dec.
m. _ Macdonald of Forsit

dau.
m. _ Macdonald of Glencoe

dau.
m. _ Macdonald of Ardnabie

dau.
m. _ Kennedy of Linachen Mor

Donald Gorm Macdonald of Inverary progenitor of Tigh Mhurtagain

son (d 1693)

Sean Angus Macdonald (d 1640)
m. _ Macdonald (dau of Sir James Macdonald of Islay)

Angus Macdonald, 1st of Achnancoichan (a 1660)

Alexander Macdonald, 2nd of Achnancoichan (a 1714)

Angus Macdonald, 3rd of Achnancoichan
m. Christina Macdonald

Angus Macdonell or Macdonald of Insch, 17th of Keppoch (d after 1819)
@3 above

Sean Angus Macdonald of Kenknock (d c1700)

Angus Og Macdonald of Kenknock then Garth
m. ?? (possibly dau of Alexander Robertson, minister of Forthingall)

John Macdonald of Garth (b c1745, d c1790)
m. Magdalena Small (dau of Capt. James Small and Catherine Wilton)

Angus Macdonald of Garth (d unm)

m1. Magdalena Small (dau of Capt. James Small and Catherine Wilton)

John Macdonald of Garth (b 1773, d c1866) had issue:
m. Amelia Macgillies (dau of Duncan Macgillies and Maria Kuhn of Williams-town, Ontario)

Magdalene Macdonald
m. Hon. William MacGillivray

m2. Buchanan

Helen Macdonald
m. Sir Archibald Campbell of Ava (cousin)

m3. ??

Archibald Macdonald had issue in Ontario
m. Boswell (dau of Hon. Capt. _ Boswell, RN)

other issue - Archibald, daughter (authorless)
Standing beside the burial place of John Aberarder MacDonald at the Cille Choirill cemetery in Lochaber, Fr Michael McPhee holds in his hand a copy of Ann MacDonell's booklet.

“Gentle Locheil” Cameron. Hero.
Appendix 3: McPhee of Lochaber and the Lords of the Isles
by Bernie McPhee

A number of historians give the impression that people called McPhee appeared in Lochaber Scotland only after 1623, when they were running away from the troubles in Colonsay. This in far from the full story. Not only were there people called McPhee in Lochaber for hundreds of years before this date of 1623, but they were of the contemporary society’s highest rank who twice married into the family of the Lords of the Isles, and who once took their McPhee blood by marriage (of a McPhee grandchild) into the earliest Locheil Cameron family, that family which was just taking its formative and Lordly shape in the middle of the 15th Century. And by the way, the name was always spelt ‘McPhee’.

So, relying upon, and starting from, the work of the late Josephine MacDonell of Spean Bridge Lochaber who was writing in 1931, I have prepared a simplified MacDonald genealogy, showing how McPhees are intimately involved with those same MacDonalds, and with the Camerons too.

**Starting with Somerled**

Somerled 1140
Reginald 1211
Donald 1289

Angus Mor Died 1334. This Angus Mor was the first MacDonald, says Rev Archibald MacDonald.
Angus Og 1329 Received the Lordship of Lochaber after the Battle of Bannockburn 1314, as well as the lands of Morvern and Ardnamurchan, previously owned by the MacDougalls who had sided with Comyn against the King. It was always a danger in those days of picking the wrong side to win. It is understood that McPhee sent from Islay at this time to hold safe the Lochaber lands for MacDonald.

John Lord of the Isles. 1329 – 1380 Main seat of MacDonald Rule was Islay.

John of the Isles appointed McPhee as hereditary Keeper of the Records to the Lord of the Isles. Therefore when there was a solemn ceremony of anointing of a new Lord of the Isles, in front of the anointing Bishop of Argyll and seven priests, and in front of all the heads of tribes, and in front of the vassals and main chiefs of MacDonald, McPhee, in his special role as the Keeper of the Records, and acting as ORATOR, would read out the catalogue of the New Lord’s ancestors.

McPhee as ORATOR and as Keeper of the Records would be a witness to the sword of his father being placed in hand of the newly anointed Lord, and a witness to the new Lord of the Isles swearing to continue his vassals in possession of their lands and to do exact justice to all his subjects. (Martin Martin told us all about this about 1700). McPhee’s was a prestigious and significant role.

It might seem at first glance that there is a long space of years between the early leaders. This might not be so unusual and could be put into perspective when we contemplate the fact that the Scottish born grandfather of the author of this article was born 178 years ago, i.e. in 1833. I am writing this in September, 2011.

**John Lord of the Isles 1329 – 1380**

John had two marriages: **First Marriage** was to his first cousin Annie MacKuarie. Annie was the daughter of Roderick, and was the heiress to his extensive lands. John and Annie had two children. They inherited back the lands which their mother had brought to the wedding with John: the son Ranald (Reginald) was to become the ancestor of Clan Ranald and Glengarry. I don’t know what Godfrey got out of the deal. But the family of the second marriage took precedence in regard to the other vast inheritances and titles of the great John Lord of the Isles. **Second Marriage** was to Princess Margaret Stewart, daughter of King Robert II of Scotland.

**Second Marriage of John MacDonald to Margaret Stewart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DONALD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd Lord of the Isles, Died 1424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From whom comes the Sleat Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th Earl of Ross who married Lady Margaret Lesley, Countess of Ross whose son was ALEXANDER MACDONALD, 3rd Lord of the Isles. One of whose marriages was to the daughter of MCPEE OF LOCHABER (Glen Pean)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And they were the parents of Celestine of Lochalsh who never quite became the Lord of the Isles, but he and his mother both rate a mention on an IONA monument.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IAIN MOR OF ISLAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iain became the Lord of the Glens and Earl of Antrim in Ireland on his marriage to the Irish heiress Margery Bissett. Large Irish properties were transferred to John, Lord of the Isles, his father.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALISDAIR CARRAGH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1380 – 1443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lordship of Lochaber bestowed on Carragh by his father the 1st Lord of the Isles. Alisdair Carragh married Mary, daughter of the Earl of Lennox. Alisdair, 1st Chief of Keppoch. But, in 1443 the Braes of Lochaber were forfeited to MacIntosh by the 3rd Lord of the Isles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marriage of Alisdair Carragh (1st Keppoch Chief) to Mary Lennox

one son ANGUS OF FERSIT (2nd Keppoch Chief)

Marriage of Angus of Fersit to daughter of McPhee of Glenspean

first son
DONALD MACANGUS
(3rd Keppoch Chief)
1484 -1496 First child of Keppoch and daughter of McPhee of Glenspean.
Donald married the daughter of Cameron of Lochiel.
Donald made peace with King James IV.
Donald’s son was Iain Aluinn (4th Keppoch Chief) But he ruled for only one year.
Deposed for acknowledging MacIntosh Lordship over Lochaber.
His uncle took over as Keppoch Chief.

second son
ALEXANDER OF THE GLENS
(5th Keppoch Chief)
1497 -1500 Second child of Keppoch and daughter of McPhee of Glenspean.
Alexander married the daughter of Donald Gallach of Sleat, whose mother was a MacDonell of Antrim.
She brought Irish Clans to Lochaber.
Alexander’s son was DONALD GLAS
(6th Keppoch Chief) 1499 – 1513
Donald Glas married a daughter of Cameron of Lochiel.
MacIntosh invaded Lochaber.
King James IV sent Alexander Gordon, 3rd Earl of Huntly to quell Lochaber.
Commission of fire and sword against Keppoch.
Donald Glas submitted to Huntly, and was granted some lease of Lochaber lands. But Mamore granted to Stewarts of Appin.
And lands to north of Spean River granted to MacIntosh.
This last grant of land kept alive the 250 years of unresolved tensions and hostilities between Keppoch and MacIntosh.

first daughter
MARIOT MACDONELL
Third child of Keppoch and daughter of McPhee of Glenspean.
Mariot, sister of the 3rd and 5th Keppoch Chiefs, married in 1493 to Ailean nan Creach (Allan of the Forays) or, Allan Cameron of Lochiel.
The son of Mariot and Alan was to become the famous Alan, Captain of Clan Cameron, one of whose seven chapels of propitiation can be seen today restored and defiant at the Cemetery of Cille Choirill in Lochaber.

The Clan Sheilds of MacPhee and Keppoch
according to MacIan’s “The Clans of the Scottish Highlands”
Appendix 4: The McPhees of Ancient Lochaber

Introduction:
I suppose that every soldier who goes off to war will, at some time, have to say goodbye to the parents or sisters and brothers and walk out to the front gate, close the gate, and head off to the conflict. So it would have been in 1431 when McPhee of Glenspean left his Killichonate residence and set out for the Battle of Inverlochy, just down the road. Did he take his lunch with him? Where did he fall in with the others from around Glen Spean? Was there some special duty for those who lived near the battlefield to make some provision for fighters from afar? In this instance did the Keppoch Macdonells and the Glenspean McPhees take a few loads of oats and oatmeal to feed the hungry MacDonalds coming from Isla and other more distant Islands? Was he prepared to let the allied Clansmen slaughter his beasts to feed motivated kinsmen who were about to die, for the cause of which they themselves were all a committed part?

This was in that definitive Century when Scotland’s King James I, II and III gradually obtained the mastery over Scotland, and by 1493 the Lordship of the Isles gradually dropped away to almost nothing.

Anyway in 1431, McPhee of Glenspean, described in Keppoch literature as the “leader of a powerful sept of that time” would have had a good company of McPhee relations. Perhaps they all met at the side gate to the Killichonate property. We know how some people are always late. Were some of the McPhee fighting men still dragging on their vestments of chain mail, still arranging some protective head gear, or borrowing a targ or shield from better equipped relatives?

There would have been this problem – would they fight as a group of McPhees for more teamwork, for a schwerpunkt of McPhee power, or would they disperse themselves among the Keppoch MacDonells, or among the Camerons who were very much to be caught up in this fight also (unlike the Camerons divisive performance against almost the same puppet creatures of King James in 1429), and so lessen the chance of all the McPhees being wiped out should that McPhee part of the battlefront be devastated? They were to fight against the men of the King of Scotland after all.

What part in the actual fighting would McPhee of Glenspean himself take? He had been to the forefront in the 1429 bloodshed, with no Camerons to help out. He would be about fifty years of age in 1431 and could well have been worn out, exhausted, even before the troops got in place ready for their throwing themselves at the troops of the Earl of Mar or the Earl of Caithness, wherever the MacDonals of the Lord of the Isles under Balloch placed them.

Nobody expected the forces of these two doughty Earls, the King’s men, to be a pushover. But for his comfort McPhee would look along the drawn up troops and see his Cameron in-laws at the ready, and he would see Alisdair Carragh still bravely readying himself and encouraging his Keppoch men, and he the same age as Glenspean McPhee. This Alisdair Carragh was the father of Angus Fersit who was McPhee’s son in law. So once again Alisdair Carragh of Keppoch and McPhee of Glenspean were in the fellowship of arms, while their respective children Angus Fersit of Keppoch and Glenspean McPhee’s daughter were in the fellowship of holy matrimony.

MacIan portrays the McPhee soldier in chain mail and ornate headgear, with heavy sword and spears. Not the best outfit for the fierce charging at the enemy of later Highlanders. No shield either. See Page 158 of MacIan’s “The Clans of the Scottish Highlands” for a slightly different version of this portrait.
I have long been interested in the McPhees of Lochaber. Before 1622, the part of Scotland known as Lochaber in the Western Highlands of Scotland was an area which encompassed those districts or parishes which are today known as “Kilmunivaig” and “Kilmallie”. After 1622 Lochaber was coextensive with “Kilmunivaig” alone. We sometimes hear people say that McPhee people went to Lochaber after 1623, because that’s when Malcolm the Chief of McPhee was killed on Colonsay Island. The Clan was “broken”, they say. Well, that probably happened, but in fact the McPhees were well established in Lochaber as least two hundred years before that date of 1623. The refugees from Colonsay don’t seem to have added to McPhee numbers in Lochaber. I suppose that these Colonsay refugees would not have been called “McPhee”.

Earl Douglas MacPhee (In his book: “The Mythology, Traditions and History of MacDubhshith – MacDuffie Clan Vol VI The Lands of Our Fathers) noticed that Neil, the 13th Chief of McPhee (1420 to 1450), was a Lochaber man, and that McPhee fought at Inverlochy in 1431. These two McPhees, Neil of Glenspean and Angus of Glenpean, are a key to the schema which I have prepared. It was first published in “The Downunder”, the Magazine of the Mache Clan Society in Australia in April, 2009: Editor Mr Ian McPhee. So, the following chart identifies four significant 15th Century Lochaber McPhees.

The great grandfather of Bernard and Robert was born in 1796, and this is nearly half way back to the known Lochaber McPhees. So this picture of Bernard and Robert McPhee might well be a picture of McPhee of Glen Spean and McPhee of Glen Pean in ancient Lochaber, Scotland, because it appears that the DNA of all four people would be identical, that is in relation to the Male Haplotype with forty three characteristics that were evaluated in the Mache Clan Society study and which have been taken into account.
Appendix 5: The MacDonells of Aberarder
By Robert MacFarlane.

The chiefs of Keppoch are a thing of the past, the last recorded (legitimate) chief of Keppoch was Chieftain who supposedly died at Greenock in 1848. With him the direct line of Keppoch came to an end. Evidence of Chichester is very sketchy. Josephine MacDonell (author of "The MacDonells of Keppoch and Gargavach") writes of him that he had a commission in the Glengarry Fencibles, resided in Glasgow and Greenock, married beneath himself and had two sons who died unmarried in Canada. There is a Chichester MacDonell who attested into the "Grant, Strathspey or 1st Highland Fencible Regiment" on 7th March 1797 as a private. He was born in Boleskine in 1769 and was transferred to the "Glengarry Fencibles" as Sergeant on 24th December 1794. He was discharged in Ireland on 24 December 1801, the regiment was discharged on 1st July 1802, in Scotland. Could this be Chichester, 21st Chief of Keppoch?

This account is concerned with "Sliochd an Tighe", of John Dubh of Bohuntin, a natural son of Ronald Mor, VII of Keppoch. The descendants of John Dubh of Bohuntin have been described as "greater than the stars in the sky" and are to be found in all the corners of the world. In particular, I will be giving a brief historical account of the MacDonells of Aberarder along with my findings on more recent members of this family. Where necessary I will correct that most valuable source of MacDonald genealogy, "The Clan Donald" by the Reverends A. & A. MacDonald.

Aberarder is situated on the western shore of Loch Laggan, a beautiful desolate spot between Roy Bridge and Kingussie. Some of the Sliochd an Tighe had acquired rights of possession to most of the principal farms of MacIntosh's estate of Loch Laggan by the beginning of the eighteenth century and it may be argued that this was the result of a century old policy on the part of MacIntosh which drew the estate of Loch Laggan, a beautiful desolate spot between Roy Bridge and Kingussie. Some of the Sliochd an Tighe had acquired rights of possession to most of the principal farms of MacIntosh's estate of Loch Laggan by the beginning of the eighteenth century and it may be argued that this was the result of a century old policy on the part of MacIntosh which drew the Sliochd Iain Dubh to a mid-way position between himself and the much more recalcitrant Keppoch family and its dependants in Glen Spean and Glen Roy.

Donald, 1st of Aberarder, was the 2nd son of Angus of Tulloch who was a 2nd son of John Dubh of Bohuntin.

Archibald, 2nd of Aberarder was born in 1657 and in 1703 received a tack from Lachlan MacIntosh of Strone of the lands of Moy and Coillerois.

John, 3rd of Aberarder, was granted a tack of Moy and Kyllross from the Duke of Gordon in 1726. At this time, 1726, Lachlan MacIntosh of MacIntosh agreed to dispose of some of his Loch Laggan-side possessions in form of wadset to Macpherson of Cluny. John was granted a simple tack of Aberarder by MacIntosh/Cluny jointly in 1730-31. This was to cause problems a few years later after the '45 when a decision to place Aberarder among the forfeited estates was under question.

Note: Moy and Kyllross are both situated at the western end of Loch Laggan. Correction to "The Clan Donald" - It was Archibald 2nd and not John 3rd who died in 1716, actually 1714, and was buried at Cille Choirill. In fact this tombstone has the oldest inscription still visible today: "This stone is placed here by Ranald MacDonell, Aberarder, son to John MacDonell Tireon my grandfather Gatepick Mywill Vinwil of Keappock who died the year 1714 aged 57 years."

Ranald, 4th of Aberarder, who placed the above gravestone in Cille Choirill, was granted a tack in 1751 from the Duke of Gordon, along with his brother Alexander, for Moy and Kyllross. His father John was obviously dead by this time but it is not known when or where he was buried. Ranald was prominent in the '45 and sheltered Prince Charles while on the run after Culloden. He had been a Captain in Keppoch's regiment and had escaped from Culloden. As mentioned earlier, Aberarder became a hot potato after the '45 when the estate of Cluny was placed under the forfeited estates. MacIntosh contested that Aberarder should not be included and although the case went as far as the House of Lords, he was not successful.

The Aberarder family, with their subtenants, remained at Aberarder. Mr Butter, factor to the forfeited estates, received a petition dated 20th June 1766, from Robert Macpherson (Chaplain)...: "served in America for 7 years, on reduction put on half pay. Being a half pay chaplain, he is prevented by act of parliament from holding ecclesiastical position. He therefore wants to try farming. Seen methods while travelling home and abroad which he thinks will enable him to carry on better than most. Therefore requests Aberarder and Tullochom comprehending Strachronnach as possessed by Ronald and Alexander MacDonell."

Report by factor relevant to the petition:- "Factor knows of no improvement having been made and that the tenants are esteemed bad farmers and that they have been very troublesome to their neighbours in that district. He thinks the petitioner would be good."

Mr Butter wanted the MacDonells out. There followed petitions by both Alexander and Ranald MacDonell stating "they had behaved themselves, paid rent, family had possessed farm for more than 100 years, have run the farm since their arrival at the age of manhood and are now living there with family, servants, subtenants and cottars, amounting in all to about 80 souls."
There were many ‘favours’ written for Ranald and Alexander including ones from “the Laird of MacKintosh” and “the Minister of Logy.”

Mr Butter brought an action of removal before the Sheriff of Inverness in 1767 and 1768, in both cases the action was dismissed. At Martinmas 1767, a letter from the Barons of Exchequer in Scotland/Treasury chamber states “...that the Barons have the sole and absolute care and management of the forfeited estates. Therefore Randall McDonald and Alexander McDonald’s memorial objecting to their being removed from their farms, has been suspended.”

Clearly Ranald and Alexander were up against it!

The case went to the Court of Session and after appeal, ordained the removal to take place at Whitsunday 1770.

While this case was still going on, Ranald was given Torgulbin by the Duke of Gordon in 1769 with the following Comment... “Aberarder (the bankrupt) getting Torgulbin for £15 because no one else wants it and its isolated situation. He despairs (Mr Tod, the Duke’s factor) of getting rent paid by him and his brother.”

Ranald is shown in Torgulbin, Moy and Kylross up till 1785, whereon arrears for Moy in 1789 only refer to John and Alexr MacDonell, Ranald’s sons. Ranald married Grace, daughter of Duncan Stewart of Achnacone with issue:

1. John, born c. 1748, later 5th of Aberarder.
2. Alexander, born c. 1750. He joined the army at an early age and by 1796 he had taken over as Tacksman of Moy on his own, previously held jointly with his brother John. He was described as Lieut in the rentals for 1796 and 1800 and by 1804 as Captain. He is shown in the rentals for Moy up till 1833, though by then he had moved west to live at Inverlair. In 1829, he was given a year’s rent of Inverlair to build a dwelling house there and it is assumed he died shortly after, or during, 1833. When exactly he went to live at Inverlair is not certain, it first appears on the rental in 1813. Around 1818, along with Dr Smith, a medical practitioner residing at Fort William, he was involved in opening up the old grave at Inverlair to verify the story of the Keppoch murderers having their heads removed by lain Lom, the Keppoch bard.

He was commonly referred to as “Othaichear a’ Mhagh” -the Officer of Moy and then in later years as “Othaichear Inbhir Lair” - of Inverlair. He was married on the 22nd of April 1788 to Jane (Juliet) MacDonald from Rannoch in Perthshire with issue 8 sons and 3 daughters. All his sons went abroad except Ranald who became a Captain in the 92nd Highlanders. This same Ranald died in 1872 and is buried in Cille Choirill, his tombstone having the only Gaelic inscription among the old stones there. Another son to Alexander, Archibald, was Tacksman of Inverlair when he married in 1837 and in the 1841 census. There were no MacDonells at Inverlair by 1851 and Archibald died in Australia in 1871.

3. Archibald, also joined the army, becoming a Lieutenant in the 26th Foot He married Janet Stewart. Daughter of Robert, proprietor of Lassintullich, on the 21st February, 1802. Lassintullich is situated about 2 miles east of the eastern end of Loch Rannoch. It would appear that Archibald farmed Lassintullich although Janet’s only brother John was proprietor. Archibald and Janet had 6 sons and 3 daughters, all born at Lassintullich. Archibald was dead by 1841 and Janet was proprietor in 1861. Janet died in 1865 and according to the Register of Sasines for the same year her eldest son David inherited the lands of Tempar and Lassintullich from his mother.

David is shown at Lassintullich House in 1871 where he is described as “Landowner and farmer of 800 acres employing 4 men, 1 boy 3 women”. The rest of his family are not shown then and there is no record of David or family at Lassintullich in 1881.

4. Grace, married Donald MacDonell, Monessie, known as Donald Ban Og, with issue in Australia. Recent research has shown descendants of Grace which has implications as far as a Keppoch claim is concerned.

John, 5th of Aberarder, was born c. 1748 and is recorded in Torgulbin and Moy in 1782 and 1784 with his brother Alexander. The events at home (eviction) surrounding his teens must have had an influence on him and perhaps that is why he sometimes behaved in a tempestuous, almost arrogant manner. This can best be illustrated from notes taken down from Donald Campbell (b. 1847) about Father MacKenna, who ministered in the Braes c.1770.

“MacKenna was a hardy man (translated from the Gaelic), Ross the Minister said he used to thrash the gentry. . . James (MacKintosh) grandfather of Angus Ban MacKintosh, Bohuntin was MacKenna’s clerk. He was with him at the Marriage at Lianachan when he gave Ian Dubh Aberardair a beating saying in Gaelic “Son of the devil Aberarder, you make trouble wherever you go.”

**John was always referred to as “John Dubh Aberarder” as can be seen on his correspondence, gravestone inscription and newspaper obituary. He married Catherine, a daughter of Col. Alexander MacDonell of Keppoch who died at Cul loden. “The Clan Donald” and “Father Andrew MacDonell’s Chart” show two sons, John and Archibald. There is no further evidence of Archibald. In fact John Dubh’s gravestone at Cille Choirill has “this stone is placed here by their only son Captain John MacDonell, Killichonate”.

Known family:

1. **John, born c.1774, later 6th of Aberarder.**
2. **Sarah, born c.1780,** married Alexander McVean who was subtenant to his father-in-law at Torgulbin in 1808 and 1809 and then holding the tack on his own till 1814. In 1814, the Duke of Gordon’s factor wrote to Capt. John MacDonell at Fort Charlotte stating “he is to take over Torgulbin from Alex McVean who is paying the consequence of resisting the Duke”- the controversy is not
recorded. Sarah died at Drimfour in 1818 and is buried next to her father in Cille Choirill. There are no children of this marriage recorded.

3. Isabel, born c.1781, married Donald Rankin with issue 6 sons and 1 daughter. They were living at Killichonate in 1841 and Donald died there in 1842. Being a native of Glencoe, he was buried on Eilean Munda. Isabel left Killichonate for Australia with 5 sons in 1848 and she died at Tumut, New South Wales, on 24th January, 1864. Her daughter Christine married John MacGregor and their descendants are still to be found at Achnabobane, just outside Spean Bridge. All known descendants of Isabel have been recorded by Mr Michael Scott, a descendant.

On Donald Rankin's gravestone it is recorded that Isabel was the youngest daughter of John Dubh, thus the remaining two daughters were born between 1774 and 1780.

4. Janet, married Donald Ruadh MacDonald, Torgulbin and had 7 sons. It is not known when Donald or Janet died although Janet was still alive in 1841, living with her son John.

In 1831 John Dubh petitioned the Duke of Gordon twice on Donald's behalf:- Aug. 1813 - Memorandum of favours:- "John MacDonell has one of his daughters married to one Donald MacDonell Tenant at Gordonsburgh one of his people that has seven sons, if his Grace would give them a small Park now used by one Munro a single man and a Drunkard, it would do much good if MacDonell got the Park 1813 - Offer made by John Dubh for Killichonate mentions." Donald came to Gordonsburgh who is married to one of his daughters and who has 7 McDonald boys, wanting a park held by Munro." All known descendants of Janet have been recorded by Mr Roiy MacDonald (g.g.g grandson of Janet), Mr Don Copeland and Mr Michael Scott. One son, John, is better known as 'Long John', who started the Ben Nevis Distillery and it was with him that Janet was living in 1841. Long John's descendants are to be found at Blarour, Spean Bridge.

5. Grace, married John MacFarlane, Badenoch. John was moved from the farms of Kingussie and Ardbrylack in 1800 to make way for the new village of Kingussie. He then settled at Phones from which he was again moved as part of the clearances of that area by James Macpherson in 1805. John MacFarlane was an old man, reputedly aged 81 when his son Peter was born in 1806. John Dubh also petitioned the Duke on John MacFarlane's behalf in 1811 and 1813.

Sept. 1811 - Letter to the Duke supporting an offer made by John MacFarlan for one half of the farm of Coul.

Aug. 1813 - Memorandum of favours:- “John MacDonell has a daughter married to one MacFarlan in Kingussie a very old man that cannot do much good to his family, if he got one of the Crofts in Unachan where he would be near his wifes friends they would manage the Croft for MacFarlans wife and family...”

John MacFarlane died in Kingussie village c.1817 and his widow and son came to live at Killichonate with his brother Capt. John MacDonell. All Grace's descendants have been recorded by myself and the MacFarianes are still to be found at Spean Bridge. (My own place of birth.)

John Dubh moved to Killichonate around 1795 and remained there till his death in 1818. He seems to have had a “charmed” relationship with the Duke of Gordon as illustrated by certain letters and documents:- Killichonate 1805 - highest offer made by Mr Leslie £100 -John Dhu offers £64 - in corner written - 'Aberarder to have it at present rent’. 6 Sept. 1813 - on outside of letter offering for his son to get Lianachan - “John Dhu Killichonate ‘palavering’.” 7 Sept. 1813 - Memorandum of favours - “Mr J. MacDonell Killichonate - asking favours from the Duke of Gordon - for his meritorious service, - a Halter!! March 9, 1816 - to Capt. John MacDonell:- letter accepting his promise to meet his father's rent, and will stop the proceedings of removal against him with Capt. John's promise of punctuality.

March 19, 1816- to Capt. John MacDonell:- still on about his father not paying rent, quotes that he is subletting for wintering and making a profit, even although he has gone 2 full rents without paying - goes on to say that the resident factor will execute the Summons of Removal against him - but will be avoided if he pays arrears.

The final crunch came in April 1817 when a letter was sent to Capt. John telling him:- “the Duke approves of him taking over as Tacksman from his father.”

In one of John Dubh's letters to the Duke of Gordon, he signs thus:-

MY LORD DUKE
YOUR GRACES MOST HUMBLE
AND MOST OBdt FAITHFULL
HIGHLAND SERVt

JOHN MCDONELL
ABERARDER

John Dubh died on 18th March 1818, just over a month after his daughter Sarah. He is buried in Cille Choirill and the inscription on his flat, substantial stone is:-

"Sacred to the memory of John MacDonell Killichonate commonly called John Dubh Aberarder who departed this life 18 March 1818 aged 70 and Catherine his spouse who departed this life 25 July 1829 aged 90 years, daughter of Colonel Alexander MacDonell, Keppoch who was killed at the battle of Culloden in 1746."
The Inverness Journal of April 17 1818 had this to say:-
“...At Killichonate on the 18th ult, universally regretted in the 70th year of his age Mr John MacDonell, commonly called John Dow, Aberarder. His remains were attended to the grave by 459 brave Highlandmen, as a mark of their respect for the memory of a genuine Highlander.”

John, 6th of Aberarder was born c. 1774. One of the best ways to summarise John would be to quote from his obituary in the Inverness Courier of May 13th 1840 - “At Killichonnet near Fort William, on the morning of the 29th ult, aged 66, Captain John Mac Donell, a Deputy Lieutenant and J.P for Inverness-shire. After serving successively in the 2nd, or Queens, the 92nd Highlanders, and the 3rd Royal Veteran Battalion, in the West Indies, Ireland, Holland and Egypt, Captain MacDonell returned to Lochaber and settled at Killichonnet; where among the poor of a populous Highland district, his kindness, condescension and charity made him universally beloved and respected; while amongst his compeers, he was greatly esteemed as a warm-hearted, hospitable and attached friend, possessing in an extraordinary degree, all those fine principles of honour and chivalry which tend so much to adorn the chieftain and the soldier.”

If I was to judge John by his relationship with the Duke, having no controversy like his father and comments in letters about him helping people, then I would say his obituary is an accurate account of him.

The Royal Garrison Battalions were formed in 1802 and later named the Royal Veteran Battalions in 1804. John was a Captain in the 6th, which was formed to do duty in the forts and garrisons in Scotland. In 1814, the 6th was disbanded except for two companies which were incorporated with two of the 9th R.V.B. and numbered 3rd Royal Veteran Battalion. John is described as of the 6th R.V.B. and later as the 3rd R.V.B.

Captain John married Jane Antoinette Gordon (of Wardhouse) on October 10, 1803 at Sunnybank, Aberdeen. The births and deaths of their children indicate the whereabouts of John before he settled back at Killichonate.

Issue:

1. Charles Archibald, born 8 March 1806 at Fort Augustus, died 26th March 1806.
2. George, born 16 January 1807 at Fort Augustus, died the same evening.
4. Charlotte Frances, born 3rd April 1810 at Fort George, died 28th August 1810 “at Mr Hay's Lerwick, Shetland”.
5. Ronald John, born 14th May 1813 at Fort Charlotte in Shetland.

He was at Sandhurst from 7.10.1829 to 30.6.1832 after which he was appointed to the 28th Reg. of Infantry.

Received a Lieutenancy on 26.6.1835, was engaged in the 1st New Zealand War and sold out in 1840 in Australia.

Ronald moved to California and then B.C. Canada in 1858. He held several posts in the Canadian Militia, “Supt. of Stores in 1874” and “District Paymaster 1879 ’ He died at Victoria, British Columbia on August 1st 1887. His death particulars make no mention of a wife or children whereas “The Clan Donald” states he married a sister of Captain Maclean of Lakefield, with issue.

6. James Mercers, born 3 September 1815, died Edinburgh 16th December 1815.

7. Eliza Catherine, born 2nd June 1818 at Killichonate. She stayed on at Killichonate with her mother after the death of her father in 1840. Her mother died in 1849 after which it is not clear where Eliza went to live. She died at South Bridge, Aberdeen on 19th April 1875. She is buried in the churchyard of St. Nicholas Aberdeen and there is a memorial stone to her in St. Andrew’s churchyard, Fort William, next to the grave of her cousin Juliet (g.daugther of Alexander of Moy.)

As was previously mentioned, Capt. John took over as “Tacksman of Kyiiichonnet” in 1817. In the same year he corresponded with the Duke of Gordon re improvements to his house at Killichonate. The present Killichonate house is an imposing, substantial building and has inscribed above the front door:- “JMcD 1836 JG” (initials of John and his wife). As John was living at Killichonate when he died in 1840, it can only be assumed that he was buried in Cille Choirill, though no memorial exists there!

Note: After the death of John’s wife Jane in 1848, the farm of Killichonate moved out of the Aberarder family. For many years (this century) the house was used as a hostel for forestry workers and more recently as tourist accommodation.

George Gordon 7th of Aberarder, spent most of his life in the Army. He entered the service in January 1826 and by April 1869 was appointed Brigadier-General of the second class and to the command of the Southern District (India). On August 12th of the same year he was promoted to the first class, and transferred to the Northern District The “Hodson Index” states that he was at King’s College, Aberdeen, Lieutenant in 1826, Captain 1841, Major 1856, Lt. Col. 1862 and Colonel 1865. He married Charlotte, third daughter of Rev. Dr Batten, of Halleybury, Herts. on 5th February, 1839 at Samulcottah, India. George was described as Lieut., qt. mast. and interpreter 27th Native Infantry.

With issue:

1. George Gordon, Born Singapore 2nd January 1845 and died at sea between Malacca and Madras 2nd July 1846.
2. Katherine Jane Gordon, according to the "Hodson Index", she was the eldest daughter and married Robert Thorpe, 27th Madras Native Infantry. According to “The Clan Donald”, “a daughter, who married a Captain Thorpe, without issue”.

3. Christina Eliza Frances, born at Killichonate 19th October 1847. Nothing else is known about Christina.

“George was present with the force that marched from Bangalore on April 8, 1857, to quell the insurrection in Canara; was employed in the supression of the mutiny in Bengal, 1857-58-59; commanded the field detachments that proceeded from Dorundah to Chota Nagpore to subdue the insurgents; defeated the rebels in an engagement on January 22, 1858, capturing four small field pieces, totally routing the enemy, and killing their leader; served with the force under Major-General Whitlock, K.C.B., in Bundelkund, and commanded the infantry detachment that proceeded in March 1859, under Brigadier Faddy, against Runmost Singh.”

This extract of his career was taken from the obituary to him in the Inverness Courier of 2nd December 1869. George died at Madras on October 17th, 1869, and he was interred in St Mary’s cemetery Madras, with military honours. The Madras Mail had this to say:- “the deceased General will be much lamented. He was an exceedingly amiable and agreeable man, popular alike with officers and sepoys. He was full of anecdote and reminiscence of the days of his long distant youth, and was of a peculiarly happy temperament”

As a footnote to George, when his cousin Peter MacFarlane was married at Brompton, London, in 1877, his first action was to take his new wife to see a portrait of Brigadier George Gordon, which was on display nearby. Attempts to trace this portrait have so far been unsuccessful.

With George’s death in 1869, the direct line of “Aberarder” came to an end after approximately 250 years. The present Aberarder would have to be found among the descendants of Captain Alexander of Moy, brother to John Dubh, 5th of Aberarder. As genealogy becomes more and more popular, the task of discovering “Aberarder” may not be that difficult.

Whoever that man may be or wherever he may be found, he will have a fascinating history to look back on, at least I think so!!

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Ann MacDonell of Spean Bridge Lochaber in 1985
Photo taken in Glen Roy, near site of Battle of Mulroy.