

## MCDONELL ARRIVALS IN GLENGARRY IN 1786

Submitted by Duncan Darby MacDonald

More than 500 Scottish emigrants arrived in Glengarry County in 1786 after a 61 day voyage on the Ship McDonald. Their departure was occasioned by hard times after several years of famine and increased farm rents which many could not afford. The mass exodus was organized by Lieutenant Angus McDonell, a half-pay officer from the 71st Regiment of Foot who had served in North America during the American Revolution, Father Alexander McDonell, the spiritual leader of the group, and Angus Ban Macdonell, a prominent tenant farmer and man of influence in Knoydart. Most of the emigrants came from three estates in Knoydart: Barisdale, Glengarry and Scotus; some also came from North Morar.

After a delay of five weeks, the emigrants left Knoydart on June 29, 1786 for Canada - a group of tenant farmers with their families, people who had been the backbone of their communities. The voyage of almost nine weeks was apparently uneventful except for the slaughter of a sea gull by a man named John McGinnis - shortly afterwards the ship struck a sand bar. A council on board the ship held McGinnis responsible for the misadventure and would have pitched him overboard except for the intervention of Scotus. Their arrival at Quebec on August 31, 1786 was announced in the Quebec Gazette on September 7th, 1786.

### ARRIVALS SINCE THOSE LAST PUBLISHED ( August 17,1786 )

Ship M'Donald, Robert Stevenson [ Master ], in 61 days from Glasgow. Passengers, Messrs. Ronald M'Donald, Alexander M'Donald, Ensign M'Donald of late 71st regiment, Rod. M'Donald, Lieut. M'Donald of late 71st regt., and Mr. M'Severn, Mrs M'Donald, Miss Isobella M'Donald, Miss Mary M'Donald and Miss Ann M'Donald, besides 520 steerage passengers; being ( as is said ) the whole inhabitants of a parish in the North of Scotland, who emigrated with their Priest, in hopes of bettering themselves at Cataqui and its environs.

While the reference to the passengers being the whole of the parish from which they left is an exaggeration, there is no doubt that they constituted a substantial part of the population of Knoydart. They left Quebec on September 3rd, with the women and children on bateaux and the men walking on shore until they reached Montreal. There they were met at Lachine by friends from the new settlement in Glengarry County. After a delay of a few days they continued on their journey on government boats and finally reached their destination in early October 1786.

Owing to the late arrival of the Highlanders, the government agreed to provide them with provisions until they had some prospect of feeding themselves from the harvest in 1787. Rations were provided on the scale of four and one - half pounds of potatoes, one and one - half pounds of flat fish, three and one - half pounds of flour, and two pounds of beef per week per adult. The estimated cost of provisions was less than three pounds per adult for the entire period and it was to be repaid in two installments in

October 1788 and 1789.

While a definitive list of the passengers has not been located, the list of the lands in Glengarry County on which they were located by James McDonell is equivalent to a list of the heads of the families on the vessel and is reproduced below:

List of sundry persons as Emigrants from North Britain who were located by Mr. James McDonell in the Township of Lancaster & Charlottenburgh in the years 1786 - 1787.

Index	Twp.	Conc.	Lot	Name
1)	Lancaster	5	10	Donald McDonell
2)	"	5	11	Donald McDonell
3)	"	5	12	Donald McDonell
4)	"	5	13	Gilbert McDonell
5)	"	5	16	Laulan Gilles
6)	"	5	18	John McDonell
7)	"	5	19	John McDonell
8)	"	5	23	Angus McDonell
9)	"	5	24	Colin Chisholm
10)	"	5	25	Roderick McLeod
11)	"	5	26	Runold McDonell
12)	"	5	28	John McDonell
13)	"	5	29	Dougald McDonell
14)	"	5	30	Angus McDonell
15)	"	5	37	John McGilles
16)	"	6	8	Finlay McDonell
17)	"	6	10	Donald McDonell
18)	"	6	11	Angus McDonell
19)	"	6	12	Duncan McKay
20)	"	6	13	Angus McDonell
21)	"	6	14	Angus McDonell
22)	"	6	15	Angus McDonell
23)	"	6	16	John McDonell
24)	"	6	17	John McDonell
25)	"	6	18	William McQueen
26)	"	6	19	Angus McDonell
27)	"	6	20	Donald McDonell
28)	"	6	21	Ronald McDonell
29)	Lan.	6	22	Duncan McDonell
30)	"	6	23	Allan McDonell
31)	"	6	24	Alex. McDonell
32)	"	6	25	Sam McDonell
33)	"	6	26	Duncan McDonell
34)	"	6	28	Peter McDonell
35)	"	6	29	Colin Fraser
36)	"	6	30	Alex McDonell
37)	"	6	31	Angus McDougall
38)	"	6	32	Martin Mc Gilvra.
39)	"	6	33	John McDonell
40)	"	6	34	George Susnar
41)	"	6	35	Alex McDonell
42)	"	6	36	John McDougald
43)	"	6	37	John McDonell
44)	"	7	11	Donald McDonell
45)	"	7	14	Donald McDonell
46)	"	7	15	John McDonell

Index	Twp.	Conc.	Lot	Name
47)	"	7	16	Donald McDonell
48)	"	7	17	Angus McDougald
49)	"	7	18	Angus McDonell
50)	"	7	19	Arch. McDonell
51)	"	7	20	John Kenedy
52)	"	7	21	Angus McDonell
53)	"	7	22	Angus McDonell
54)	"	7	23	Will. Chisholm
55)	"	7	24	Donald McMillan
56)	"	7	25	Angus McDougald
57)	"	7	26	Niel Bethune
58)	"	7	27	Ranold McDonell
59)	"	7	28	John McDonell
60)	"	7	29	Donald McDougald
61)	"	7	30	Ranold McDonell
62)	"	7	31	Angus McDonell
63)	"	7	32	Alex. McDonell
64)	"	7	33	James McDonell
65)	"	7	34	John Kenedy
66)	"	7	35	Rod. McDonell
67)	"	7	37	Angus McDonell
68)	"	8	14	Peter Grant
69)	"	8	15	Donald McDougald
70)	"	8	16	Donald Kennedy
71)	"	8	30	Arch. McDonell
72)	"	8	31	Allan McDonell
73)	"	8	32	Allan McDonell
74)	"	8	33	James McKay
75)	"	8	34	John McDonell
76)	"	8	35	Dougald McDonell
77)	"	8	37	Farquhar McRae
78)	Char.	5/East Bound.	1	John McDonell
79)	"	"	2	Angus McDonell
80)	"	"	3	John McDonell
81)	"	"	4	Angus McDonell
82)	"	"	5	Alex. McDonell
83)	"	"	6	Donald McDonell
84)	"	"	7	Ranold McDonell
85)	"	"	8	Allan McDonell
86)	"	"	9	Duncan McDougald
87)	"	"	10	Rod McDonell
88)	"	"	11	Ranald McDonell
89)	"	"	12	Ewen McDonell
90)	"	"	13	Angus McDonell
91)	"	6/East Bound.	3	John McDonell
92)	"	"	4	Niel Campbell
93)	"	"	5	John McRae
94)	"	"	6	Ran. McDonell
95)	"	"	7	Angus McDonell
96)	"	"	8	Angus McDonell
97)	"	"	9	William Gilles
98)	"	"	10	Arch McDougald
99)	"	"	11	Farquhar McRae
100)	"	"	12	John McDougald
101)	"	"	13	Angus McDonell

Index	Twp.	Conc.	Lot	Name
102)	"	"	14	Malcom McDonell
103)	"	7/East	1	John McInnes
104)	"	"	2	Angus McDonell
105)	"	"	4	Arch McDonell
106)	"	"	5	John Grant
107)	"	"	6	John McDonell
108)	"	"	7	Duncan Kennedy
109)	"	"	8	Alex McDonell
110)	"	"	9	John McDonell
111)	"	"	10	John McDonell
112)	"	"	11	John McDonell
113)	"	"	12	Alex McDonell
114)	"	"	13	Donald McDonell
115)	"	"	14	John McDonell
116)	"	25- 26		John Grant
South Branch of the Raisin River. ( Dueldregan)				
117	Char.	1& 2 Lot 26		Donald McDonell ( Lundy)
South from Main Branch of the Raisin River.				

The location list is signed:  
For the Surveyor General  
Chewitt & Rideout

N.B. These notations appear in connection with the Charlottenburgh locations: (1) Charlottenburgh in the 5th Concession on the East Boundary line, otherwise the 7th on the west boundary line; (2) 6th Concession on the Eastern Boundary line, otherwise the 7th on the Western boundary line; (3) 7th Concession on the Eastern Boundary line, otherwise the 9th Concession on the Western Boundary line. The second reference above appears to be in error and likely should be the 8th Concession on the Western Boundary line.

The cover sheet states that these emigrants came over with Angus McDonell ( Sandig ). It is therefore comparable to a list of passengers who were heads of families on board the ship McDonald. The index numbers on the location list do not appear on the original document and have been added for reference purposes.

**REFERENCES**

Crowder, Norman K. Early Ontario Settlers; a Source Book. Baltimore, Maryland; Publishing Co., Inc., 1993. Pages 188 - 190 contain a transcript of the 1786 location list reproduced above; the book also has other population lists for Ontario in the 1780s.

McLean, Marianne. The People of Glengarry: Highlanders in Transition, 1745 - 1820. Montreal, Quebec and Kingston, Ontario: McGill - Queens University Press, 1991. Pages 108 - 116 of this book have an excellent account of the emigration of these Highlanders in 1786.

National Archives of Canada RG19, Volume 4447 file 3 - list of emigrants from North Britain located by James McDonell in 1786 - 87.

Quebec Gazette, Thursday Sept. 7, 1786, number 1099, Page 2 - notice of the Arrival of the Ship McDonell.

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