



# The Lion's Face



## Newsletter of Clan Farquharson UK

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### GATHERING 2005

This will be held between 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> August 2005

The draft Programme is as follows :

Thursday	11.8.05	12.30	Ballater Highland Games
Friday	12.8.05	10.30	Farquharson Historical Tour of Ballater area
		19.30	Ceilidh in Ballater
Saturday	13.8.05	10.30	AGM at Glen Lui Hotel, Ballater
		19.30	Dinner at Hilton Craigendarroch
Sunday	14.8.05	14.00	Visit to Cairn

#### DOUGLAS & JEANNETTE GOT MARRIED !

##### **Congratulations !**

Douglas and Jeannette got married at Gretna Green, on their way up to the Gathering in August 2004.



A journey of vowed intent. This is their account of their journey.

We started our journey from London to the 2004 Clan Farquharson gathering on Saturday 7th August by road, heading for the Lake District. Grasmere was our base for the weekend.

William Wordsworth describes the area as:

*“ the loveliest spot that man hath ever found”*

We attended St Oswald's Church on the Sunday morning, and by chance a direct descendant of the poet, Rev Jeremy Wordsworth, was the guest preacher. He was part of an international conference being held there. He focused on the short life of William's brother, John, who was a naval officer, who perished at sea off the coast of Dorset. John was buried in a mass grave at Wyke Regis, near Weymouth and now has a memorial at St Oswald's. From Church we walked to Dove Cottage where William lived and wrote some of his poems. After touring the cottage we walked in the gardens up to the Bower. From here you are able to see above the roof of the cottage across the water of Grasmere. In William's day the view did not include the Grasmere Thistle Hotel ! It was here in the cottage garden that Douglas assumed the correct position, and asked Jeannette to be his bride. Having already packed the wedding dress, what could I say but YES.

Monday afternoon we arrived at Gretna Green, greeted with horizontal rain. Having made plans to marry at the famous Blacksmith's Shop the following morning, we called in at reception just to confirm our arrival and check on the arrangements. "Your name is not in our book". "Are you sure you are at the right marriage venue?" . Yes we were, a slightly clerical error which was soon resolved.

Tuesday, 10th August 2004 - the big day. This was the maiden voyage for Douglas and his kilt, and we walked the short path from the hotel to the Old Blacksmith's Shop.

There were tears in his eyes, was it the emotion or that horizontal rain delivered with a force eight wind, just above the knee. Jeannette was piped in to the Blacksmith's Shop, escorted by the "Anvil priest". Rings and vows were exchanged and the registrar proclaimed us man and wife after striking the anvil with a blow from a heavy hammer. We were then piped out in our changed status.

Despite the rain, which was now vertical and as gentle as the bride's kiss, we went outside for photographs. Diminutive hooded figures like the characters from the first "Star Wars" film appeared, armed with their Fuji digital cameras flashing; millions of pixels were sacrificed to capture this scene of "mad Doug and an English rose out in the mid-day monsoon". Then they were gone.

To celebrate Doug had requested some sparkling falling over water, to be on ice in the lounge bar of our hotel. This romantic setting had changed in our absence by a hole in the ceiling the size of a small snooker table, being stared into by various tradesmen. After the second glass, the particles of plaster on the floor became our confetti. Apart from the land-slides and roads closed due to floods, the rest of our journey to Aboyne was without incident.

We enjoyed this year's gathering, in particular the visit to the Finzean estate, the highlight for Douglas being the sawmill and bucket mills.

It was great to share our wedding celebration and honeymoon with the Farquharsons.

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## Jamie Compton's Notes on Farquharson family connections in the North American military campaigns of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century

The fascinating story about the North American indigenous artefacts at Invercauld House, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, has been told in great detail by Ruth Phillips and Dale Idiens in their article "A Casket of Savage Curiosities: Eighteenth-Century Objects from Northeastern North America in the Farquharson Collection". This was published in *Journal of the History of Collecting* 6 (1): 21-33. 1994.

Further evidence has recently emerged on the date and provenance of some of these artefacts. This collection, consisting of a beautiful wooden smoking pipe, moccasins, belts, garters, pouches, a headband, a wooden canoe and several smaller pieces, is thought to include some of the earliest known introductions of their kind into the UK. Many are elaborately woven with beads, birch bark, fir needles and coloured fabrics. They were removed from Invercauld House twenty years ago to Braemar Castle, another Farquharson property, where they

have been on display to the public. The collection has recently been returned to the USA and is due to become a major part of a forthcoming sale by Sotheby's (New York) in the spring of 2005.

Dr Scott Stephenson undertook much of the initial research on the Farquharson collection on behalf of Ruth Phillips and Dale Idiens. Scott is continuing his research in this area and is now Curator of the Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center, Philadelphia, specialising in French-Indian War. Scott mentioned to me in a telephone conversation earlier this year that he has seen a similar but smaller North American collection at Blair Castle in Perthshire and there were family connections linking the two. This information has led to the recent discovery of some very important letters that provide us with a precise date as to the introduction of several pieces in both collections.

During his research in the Invercauld archives, Scott found eleven letters written by Alexander Farquharson, kinsman to James Farquharson (1722-1805) tenth laird of Invercauld. Alexander was in financial difficulties and approached his clan chief for assistance in obtaining a commission in the army. This James achieved through his highly influential brother-in-law, John Murray (1729-1774) soon to become 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Atholl. Murray instigated a lieutenancy for Alexander with his own younger brother Captain James Murray (of Strowan 1734-1794) in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Highland Regiment bound for America and the French-Indian wars in Canada. Both Alexander and James Murray served together between 1757-1762. Alexander and James wrote lengthy and interesting letters to both James Farquharson of Invercauld and John Murray at Blair. These letters are not only a fascinating rendition of the conflicts that lead to the occupation of Canada but an insight into the close family ties between the Farquharson and Murray families. In several of Alexander's letters he refers to a "Casket of Savage Curiosities for Lady Sinclair". Lady Sinclair was the wife of James Farquharson of Invercauld. She was born Amelia Murray (1732-1779), sister of John and James Murray and in today's protocol would have been known as Mrs Amelia Farquharson. She was previously married to Lord Sinclair, who died in 1751, but she retained the name Lady Sinclair even after she married James Farquharson in 1754. Until recently there has been a general assumption that, by means unknown, some of Alexander's "curiosities" had found their way back to Scotland after his tragic death. Alexander tragically caught a fatal fever when his regiment went to Cuba in 1762.

Following up Scott Stephenson's mention of more North American artefacts at Blair Castle, I made an appointment with Jane Anderson, their archivist, and visited Blair in October. Many more letters emerged that were of considerable interest, elaborating on the stories of the Murray and Farquharson relationships. Two letters are highly significant because they have revealed how some of Alexander's "curiosities" may have arrived back in Scotland.

James Murray was wounded by a musket ball in the chest during the campaign for Martinique in 1761 shortly before he and Alexander were sent to Cuba. James was allowed to return to Britain and arrived back shortly before July 8 1762. He recuperated on the Continent and I include here a transcript of the relevant part from a letter that he sent to the Duke of Atholl from southern France:

February 20 1766. Aix en Provence.

"I hear Mr. Foot has received some things I ordered for you from America, a courious [sic] Indian pouch made from Beavers Paws two pair snow shoes and some Indian sugar, be so kind as to spare to our Brother Farquerson [sic] one pair of the snow shoes one pair mokasons [sic] and some of the sugar to our mother and sister Sinclair, as it is good for the breast in colds".

During my visit to Blair, I found another letter revealing further information on the North American collection. This was written by Captain George Murray R.N. (of Pitcaithly, 1741-1797) youngest brother of John, Amelia and James. George visited America several times between 1764-1768 in particular to Pensacola, Florida where he stayed for up to six months, he visited Carolina and Georgia (Nov. 1767) and was based in Jamaica 1764-1768. Here is an extract from a letter that he wrote to the Duke of Atholl:

March 20 1768 Renown (HMS Renown) Port Royal Harbour (Jamaica):

"Mr Crawford, the acting Lieut. of the Ferret (whome [sic] you formerly mentioned to me) has undertaken to deliver to you from me a canoe of one peace of mahogany [sic], a quash, two Curresou

birds, some Indian belts, a quiver of muskets and some Indians arrows, two grass hammoks [sic], a buffulow's [sic] skin, some bark of a tree fit for making ruffles".

The duke replied to George several weeks later that these had all arrived safely. Although these two letters only itemise some of the relevant artefacts, the collection seems to have been more or less divided between the Murray and Farquharson families sometime after the arrival of George's collection in 1768. The division appears to have not gone according to the brothers' wishes. Blair Castle has both pairs of snow shoes but only a single moccasin slipper and there is no canoe. There is also at Blair however, a beautiful head dress without feathers, a beaded belt, ten arrows plus quiver and two large carved powder horns. Many of these may well have been sent back to Blair by either Murray brother during their respective sojourns to America but for which there is no record. In another letter to George from his mother she mentioned that the quash was liable to bite and so was put in a shed alongside the chickens.

Not knowing what some of the names of these items could refer to I made some further investigations. George mentions; "bark from a tree from which to make ruffles". There is a short wooden branch that made up an unknown item in the North American collection at Braemar Castle. This was not considered to be of any significance. This piece puzzled the experts at Sotheby's. It has a lacy bark that was partly stripped back at the apex but the lacy part is still attached and consists of several fibrous layers. George's use of the term "ruffles" could easily be the early use of that word in the sense of "lace". A microscopic examination of this specimen would be necessary to identify the wood. It could however, belong to one of the American "cottonwoods" belonging to the genus *Populus* or to a species of *Tilia*.

"Curesou birds". These are usually now spelt Curessow birds and are likely to refer to species of the bird family Cracidae that have unusually crested head feathers. The Great Curessow was once a highly prized Mexican "game bird". It is therefore likely that the Duke and Duchess enjoyed good fare.

"Quash". This is most likely to be the early term used for species of raccoons. An extract from Mammals of Belize reads; "Coati or pizote : A long nosed member of the raccoon family. The Coati- also known as Quash- has a long, ringed tail, masked face, and lengthy snout.

Another element of doubt surrounds the date of introduction of the remaining unmentioned artefacts in the Invercauld collection and by whom. It is possible that Alexander Farquharson may have already sent some artefacts back directly to Invercauld during his five year campaign in America. Another possible source of the acquisition of some artefacts is the slightly later military campaign of the husband of Anne Farquharson (1723-1787) sister of James Farquharson of Invercauld. Anne married in 1741, Aeneas Mackintosh (?1700-1770) who went to America to fight in the struggles of the American War of Independence (1763-1776). Aeneas does not mention any artefacts in his many letters to his brother-in-law James Farquharson but his obvious close family ties cannot rule out the possibility of any acquisition by him.

There is no further evidence on the introduction of these fascinating pieces but it is undoubtedly reassuring that at least a few can be dated accurately on their arrival in Britain.

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## WORTHING GATHERING

Here are two photos of the Autumn 2004 Worthing Gathering . Next one on Sun 24.4.05

