

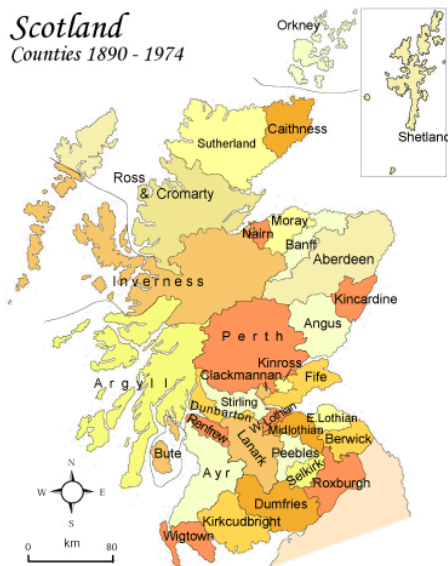
An Early History of the Magruder

by Rachel Magruder Folmar



17. DRUMMOND of Perth (Ancient).

The Magruder line can be traced directly back to Scotland, where the most common form of the name appears to be MacGrouther or MacGruther. The name “MacGrouther” comes from Gaelic, and there are various theories about its meaning. Some propose it comes from the Gaelic word *grudaire*, making *mac grudaire* “son of a fuller”. However, fulling cloth was done by the women in Gaelic culture and was not considered a profession, making this interpretation unlikely. Another possibility is that it may come from *grudair* meaning “brewer”. But perhaps the most likely (and most interesting) possibility is that it comes from *cruit*, meaning “harp”, or, more generally, musical instruments of any kind. In this case “MacGrouther” could have come from “McCruder”, meaning “son of the musician”!



The MacGrouthers lived primarily in Perthshire in central Scotland. This area of Scotland is on the boundary between the geographical and cultural divide of the Highlands and the Lowlands. The Lowlanders were thoroughly anglicized. The Norman Conquest had pushed feudalism not only into England but into the Lowlands of Scotland as well, and as a consequence the Lowlanders spoke English or Scots and lived in a similar way to their English neighbors. Highlanders, on the other hand, retained their Gaelic culture, including the Gaelic language and the clan system.

Knowing the distinction between feudalism and the clan system is crucial to understanding many of the conflicts that arose in Scotland, including those in which the MacGrouthers were involved in. In the clan system, the highest loyalty was given to one's individual family or clan. The clans all shared

a rich Gaelic culture, but they each governed themselves under their own chieftains. The idea of a united Scottish “country” or being governed by one “king” was completely foreign to the Highlanders. To make matters even more confusing, many of the Lowland feudal lairds were originally from Gaelic families and still retained some of the clan sensibilities, especially loyalty to one’s family or clan above all else, including country and king. Consequently, the history of Scotland is full of conflict and betrayal as lairds continually switch sides to support whatever cause they feel will better their family.

The MacGrouthers were a Gaelic-speaking Highland family, but their position on the borders between the Highlands and the Lowlands meant that they would have been quite exposed to Lowland culture as well. They were not part of one of the large, well-known clans, but the family quietly operated as their own small clan for a long time. Eventually, the land they lived on was owned by feudal Lowland lairds, and they became tenants and a “sept clan” of the Lowland families they worked for. Originally the MacGrouthers may have been tenants for the Murrays and the Campbells, but soon their lands were owned by the Drummonds, with whom the MacGrouthers had the closest relationship with.

The ten-mile long valley of Glen Artney and the lands near it to the east were home to many MacGrouthers. Surrounded by the large hills or “bens” of the highlands, Glen Artney followed the River Ruchill and had both forests and fields. The book *Wha’s Like Us?*



Map of Perthshire, Scotland. Glen Artney is in the southwest corner.

MacGrouthers in Scotland before 1855 by Don McGruther gives the following information about the Magruder homelands and the lairdship of the Drummonds:

“Many of the properties which feature hereafter lie in Glenartney adjacent to this stretch of the River Ruchill — Auchnashelloch, Achinner, [Craigneich,] Dalcruin, and Meigor, before the Ruchill flows into the Earn at Comrie. Following the Earn eastward one comes to Crieff, near which lies Drummond Castle. This continuing west to east sweep across Perthshire brings forth further names that will soon become familiar — Drummondearnock, Blairinroar, Straid and Wester Craigneich. Beyond Crieff, towards Perth, fall the lands of Innerpeffray, Belliclone, and Madderty.

“As will be seen, the MacGrouthers, for centuries, occupied holdings throughout this stretch of Strathearn in Perthshire at the behest of the family of Drummond, Dukes of Perth, who owned the land. Although not requiring to be a Drummond to occupy the land, the tenants, septs or cadet clans thereof would initially have been every bit as immobile as clan members. Their daily survival, like the majority of the then population of Scotland, was dependent upon the produce derived from the soil. For continued land occupation, leases or less formal tenancies, and indeed every other right, they would have been beholden to their superior, and no alternative existed, for there was nowhere else to go. In addition, land ownership was virtually unheard of for other than the nobility, or a fortunate few (such as the MacGrouthers of Craigneich, of whom the American Magruders are descended).”



The valley of Glen Artney, ancestral home of the Magruders

Among the American Magruders, it has traditionally been held since the 18th or 19th century that the Magruders were from the Clan Gregor, and that Alexander Magruder had changed his name from MacGregor due of the persecution of that clan (the MacGregors were outlawed and their name was proscribed in 1603). However, as interesting as this story may be, it has been proven false. Although the MacGrouthers lived near the MacGregors in Scotland and certainly had dealings with them, they were not themselves MacGregors and even fought against them on occasion for the Drummonds.

In addition to the historical evidence that shows the MacGrouther name in Scotland prior to the proscription of the MacGregor name, scholars of the Gaelic language have declared that “MacGrouther” cannot have derived from “MacGregor”, and according to *Wha’s Like Us?* (McGruther), “there is an improbability that a clan then in crisis such as the Macgregors would seek protection under a name and family that was simply not widespread or important enough to give them succour.” There is also no evidence that Alexander Magruder’s name was anything but a variant of “MacGrouther” in Scotland.

What’s more, DNA testing has definitively shown that the American Magruders are not descended from the MacGregor clan. Consequently, *Wha’s Like Us?* states that:

“There is thus simply no evidence at all of a Macgregor connection, and it is possible that the MacGrouthers formed a small family or “clan” in their own right by the mid-fifteenth century, possibly living in Glen Lyon, before spreading south the forty miles to Comrie, Crieff and Glenartney where they became established in numbers.”

Although this may be disappointing to those who have been fascinated by the MacGregor story, it will soon be seen that the MacGrouther story is fascinating in its own right. While it has its fair share of conflict and intrigue, our small clan has much to be proud of.

There are few references to MacGrouthers prior to the 1500s, when records begin to appear for James MacGrouther I, ancestor to Alexander Magruder the immigrant, progenitor of the American Magruders. The equivalent of “James” in Gaelic is “Seumas”, and since he and his family were likely native speakers of Gaelic, the Gaelic equivalents of their names will be included alongside the English versions. James appears to have had three sons: Duncan (Donnchadh), William (Uilleam), and James (Seumas) II.

This was a period of extraordinary instability in Scotland. Scotland was by now its own country with its own monarch (though of course this was only truly recognized in the Lowlands), but England was constantly threatening to take away their independence. An alliance with France gave Scotland an uneasy peace for a time, at least on an international scale. Internally, however, things were very different. For over a century each monarch died early, leaving a child or an infant as heir to the throne. Consequently, violent conflicts arose among the nobility as each family attempted to gain more power and influence. Scotland was essentially ruled by competing regents. The Reformation was also occurring in Scotland during this time, and the struggle between Protestantism and Catholicism was added to the mess of the warring Scottish nobility. During Mary Queen of Scots’ infancy, two main factions arose, one Catholic, in support of the crown and in alliance with France, and one Protestant in alliance with England, which had become Protestant as well.

Although it is uncertain exactly what they thought about the matter, the MacGrouthers commonly supported whichever side their lairds the Drummonds did. It is

almost certain, however, that they became Protestants, specifically Episcopalians, during the Reformation. Duncan and James II were included in a list of rebels pardoned for their deeds, along with many Drummonds and a MacGregor. They had gone with the so-called “Protestant Lords” to battle the infant Queen’s forces.

James (Seumas) MacGrouther II had two sons, John (Iain) and Alexander (Alasdair) I. At this time this particular branch of the MacGrouthers seems to have gained some power and favor from the Drummonds. John became Chamberlain to Sir Patrick, 3rd Lord Drummond, and in 1620, he became the proprietor of the land of Meigor. This was extraordinary as land ownership was reserved almost entirely for the nobility. According to Don McGruther, “John McGruder and his descendants owned Meigor for almost two hundred years. Their land ownership, rare in the MacGrouther family, gave them a high social standing in the area, though often times were hard.”

John’s brother, Alexander (Alasdair) McGruder I, was the father of Alexander (Alasdair) II who immigrated to America. Although Alexander I did not acquire land like his brother, he also had a fairly high position as Chamberlain to Sir James Drummond, 1st Lord Madderty, Baron of Innerpeffrey, Commendator of Inchaffray. After the death of Andrew 4th Lord Drummond, Alexander I married Drummond’s widow, Margaret Campbell. Margaret had an impressive lineage, going all the way back to the first king of Scotland, Robert the Bruce. Alexander and Margaret appear to have had three sons: James, Alexander II, and John.



Drummond Castle

The mid-17th century brought Civil War to both England and Scotland, as they now shared a monarch after the Union of the Crowns in 1603. The reasons behind the war were complex, but much of it was due to a widening religious and political divide between Episcopalians/Anglicans and Catholics on one side and Presbyterians/Puritans on the other side. Both Episcopalians and Catholics believed that the King had a God-given right to rule, whereas the Presbyterians and Puritans favored Parliament. In Scotland, most of the Lowland people had become Presbyterians, while Highlanders and a number of lairds such as the Drummonds remained Episcopalian or, more rarely, Catholic. Thus in a sense the war was also between the cultures of the Highlanders to the North and the Lowlanders and English to the South. This appealed greatly to the Highlanders — even though they did not care much about the King, they had been left with a great contempt for the Lowlanders and the English after having been heavily persecuted by them for years.

The Episcopalians, Catholics, Highlanders, and all those in favor of the King became known as Cavaliers, while the Presbyterians formed the Covenant. For the most part, each side wished for its particular form of religion (and, consequently, politics) to be the standard throughout all the British Isles and used any surge in power to persecute those favoring the other side.

Add the feuding Scottish clans and noble families to this mixture and the situation becomes more complicated. Loyalties to particular families and hatred of others had everything to do with which side people favored at any given time, especially in the border areas between the Highlands and Lowlands. A prominent example of this was the fact that the Campbells, Earls of Argyle, were Presbyterians on the side of Parliament. They had dispossessed many clans and were despised by the surrounding population. Consequently, many of the clans in the area sided with the Cavaliers in part because of the chance to defeat the Campbells.

In light of all this, it is not hard to understand why loyalties were constantly shifting. In *Wha's Like Us*, McGruther points out that "whatever policy — for the moment — was deemed expedient, it could find support and recruits. Individuals, and even armies, who apparently espoused one cause, shortly thereafter found themselves fighting side by side with recent opponents."

At least one MacGrouther was involved in a fascinating story that illustrates these shifting loyalties. In 1644, the Marquis of Montrose raised an army for King Charles I in cooperation with the MacDonalds, a large and powerful Highland clan from the Scottish islands. The MacDonalds had suffered at the hands of the Campbells and sought revenge. They marched to Perth, where the Covenanters were raising an army. According to *Wha's Like Us*,

"The Perthshire Militia had been called out including John Graham, Lord Kilpont, leading 400 Menteith men, together with two of his personal friends, the Master of Madderty (Sir John Drummond, son of the Earl of Perth), and James Stewart of Ardvoirlich. By any measure they were reluctant conscripts to the Covenanting cause. Apparently ignorant that Montrose now led the insurrection, they marched from Airth to join Elcho at Perth. At Buchanty, by accident or design, they were intercepted by Montrose and his force, and, hearing Montrose held the king's warrant, they and their followers (including at least one MacGrouther, a "John Growther") promptly changed sides and threw in their lot with the Cavaliers."

The Cavaliers were victorious in the battle that followed; however, that night brought about a curious turn of events:

"The victorious Cavaliers encamped nearby at Collace, where it would have been expected that the euphoria of victory would have prevailed. But it is at this juncture that a mystery ensues, one not satisfactorily explained by historians to this day, for, unaccountably, the victors fell out amongst themselves.

"It was said that Stewart of Ardvoirlich bore a grudge against Colkitto [Chief of the MacDonalds]. It was subsequently suspected that this was due to some unrecorded depredations caused to the Ardvoirlich lands during the current Irish invasion. Only the intervention of Lord Kilpont and the direct orders of Montrose kept them from fighting a duel. Later, still unappeased, Ardvoirlich berated his friend Kilpont for his unwelcome intervention until, enraged and in drink, Ardvoirlich lashed out and stabbed Kilpont to death. In escaping into the night, two camp guards also fell to

Ardvoirlich's dirk.... Stewart of Ardvoirlich escaped and joined up with the enemy — the Marquis of Argyle, who was advancing with another army.”

Stewart was accompanied in his escape by a MacGrouther and several other Stewarts. A myriad of political and religious motives were postulated for this betrayal, but there is perhaps a more personal explanation for Stewart's actions. In 1589, John Drummond of Drummond-earnoch, a Deputy Keeper of the Royal Forest of Glenartney whose mother was a MacGrouther, caught several men poaching who were supposedly MacGregors. Although the penalty was death, Drummond-earnoch decided to only chop off their ears. This did not, however, keep the MacGregors from getting their revenge — they came back later that year and murdered Drummond-earnoch. They then went to his sister's house and, after she had invited them inside and offered them food, they presented to her Drummond-earnoch's head on a platter. According to *Wha's Like Us*, “[s]he was so unnerved by the sight that she temporarily lost her mind, and fled into the countryside, only with much difficulty later regaining her sanity. Reportedly she never fully recovered.”

This was an incident for which the MacGregors were heavily punished. However, it is said that the perpetrators may not have even been MacGregors at all, but rather MacDonalds. What's more, as it turns out, James Stewart of Ardvoirlich's mother was none other than Drummond-earnoch's deranged sister. This perhaps does much to explain his grudge towards the chief of the MacDonalds and his subsequent actions at Collace.

The Cavaliers were not victorious for long. Eventually, the English military and a remnant of Parliament, led by Oliver Cromwell, took control of England and executed King Charles I. This enraged not only the Cavaliers but most of Scotland — they had not been consulted at all about any of this, and the King was from the Stewart line which had come from Scotland. On the whole they felt like England was once again refusing to recognize their legitimacy and treating them like subordinates. The Scots, except for a few notable families such as the Campbells, rebelled in support of Charles I's son, Charles II.

Cromwell responded by invading Scotland in 1650. Numerous battles followed, with the royalist Scottish army under Charles II finally invading England and being defeated by Cromwell's army at the Battle of Worcester on September 3, 1651.

The MacGrouthers were heavily involved in all of this. Being Episcopalian, they naturally tended to be Cavaliers. The Drummonds were also Cavaliers, and whenever one became a commander in the army, MacGrouthers were sure to be there as well.

All three sons of Alexander McGruder I participated in the war, fighting on the side of the royalists. Tradition holds that they all fought in the Battle of Worcester, where James



Battle of Worcester

was killed and Alexander II and John were captured and sent as indentured slaves to Barbados, then Virginia and eventually Maryland. However, records show that James apparently survived without being captured. He went on to become Burgess of Perth. He married Katherine Fyff and has numerous descendants in Scotland. John's fate is less certain. According to tradition, he returned to Scotland soon after he bought himself out of servitude, but there is no record that he even went to America, much less fought in the battle at all. It appears that he may have had some success in Scotland after the war, but it is not known if he has any descendants.

Alexander McGruder II's story, however, can be told with more certainty. He is none other than Alexander Magruder, the progenitor of all the American Magruders. Born in 1610 in Belliclone, Inchaffray, Perthshire, he would have been 41 by the time of the Battle of Worcester on September 3, 1651, where he was taken as a prisoner of war by Cromwell's army. Soon after he was sent to America as an indentured servant on the English warship the *Guinea*, presumably stopping over at Barbados on the way. They arrived in Virginia in January 1652 and then sailed the short distance to Maryland. Although indentured servants were normally required to serve for six to eight years, Alexander seems to have been able to buy his freedom and acquire land in America that same year. *Wha's Like Us* points out the following explanation for this apparent anomaly:

"Assuming that neither John... or James McGruder of Cargill were killed, [as records seem to indicate,] the solution to the mystery of the rapid advancement of Alexander, once he reached America as a prisoner, is perhaps at hand. Even with Scotland occupied by Cromwell's troopers, with the political and financial influence available to both his brothers (but James McGruder especially), it would have been little problem for them to fund Alexander's quick release in America from Indentures, should these have ever been signed. However, with his brother being a rebel, that influence might not have extended to having him repatriated in Scotland. Far from his brother being a 'poor indentured Scots prisoner' therefore, the McGruder family had access to wealth and influence amongst the greatest then in Scotland, and the release from Indentures, and even funds to facilitate the early purchase of land in America by Alexander in 1652, would seem highly feasible."

Alexander enjoyed great success in America, establishing a wealthy plantation in Calvert County, Maryland (now in Prince George's County, MD) and owning as many as 3,750 acres of land. This may have impressed some of the Drummonds his family had served in Scotland, as they soon followed his example and immigrated to America as well.

Despite his success, Alexander did not forget his homeland. It is interesting to note the names Alexander gave to his land — "Alexandria," "Anchovie Hills," "Craigneich" and "Dunblane". While "Alexandria" seems to have been named after himself or his father, the other names all refer to places in Scotland that would have held special memories for him. The "Anchovie" in "Anchovie Hills" is likely derived from "Inchaffray," where Alexander was born. "Craigneich" or "Craignaigh" is clearly named after Craigneich in Glen Artney, which had long been his family's home and is likely the place where he grew up. Finally, Alexander may have gone to school in the town of Dunblane, and his last home in Scotland may have been on the estates of the same name.



Patuxent River, Prince Georges County, Maryland

Alexander married at least twice and had six children. His first wife was Margaret Braithwaite, and she was probably the mother of Samuel (from whom our line descends), James and John. Margaret was likely the daughter of Helenor Stephenson and William Braithwaite, who held various positions in the government of Maryland. After Margaret's death, Alexander married Elizabeth, whose last name might have been Hawkins, and they probably had his last three children, Alexander, Nathaniel and Elizabeth. There is also a record that lists his wife as "Sarah," but there is no other evidence of her existence. Perhaps "Sarah" was a nickname or middle name for Margaret or Elizabeth.

"Although Alexander Magruder's descendants were active in both the political and military life of the province, Alexander according to Hester Dorsey Richardson (v.2, p. 179) 'took no part in the affairs of the land to which he was exiled.' She continues: 'We can better imagine this proud descendant of a Highland Chief seeking forgetfulness in the midst of his family and as laird of wide reaching estates in the heart of New Scotland, where as near neighbor to Ninian Beall, the untamed young rebel from the Scottish heather, they held close and condential communion. The sons and daughters of these proud Highlanders married and intermarried and their descendants and the Edmonstones, also among the banished Scots, became one family in the new world.'" (Glass family file?)

Alexander's faith seems to have been very important to him, a legacy which still continues among many of his descendants today. His will, written in 1676, begins with the following:

"In the name of God Amen this the tenth (10th) day of February in the year of our Lord 1676 I Alexander Magruder being in health of body thanks be to God & calling me to remembrance the Uncertaintie of this transitory life that all flesh must yield unto death when it pleases God to Call, I doe make constitute ordaine & declare this my last will and testament.... And first being sorrie for my sins from my heart most humbly desiring forgiveness for the same I give & commit my soul unto Almighty God my Saviour and Redeemer, in whome and by the merits of Jesus Christ I trust and believe assuredly to be saved & to have full remission & forgiveness of all my sinnes & that my soule with my body at the day of the Resurrection shall rise again with joy and through the merits of Jesus Christ death and passion possesse & inherit the Kingdome of heaven prepared for the Elect Chosen & my body to be buried in such place where it shall please my executors hereafter mentioned to poynt. Now for the setting my temporal estate and such Chattells and debts as it hath pleased God far above my deserts to bestow upon me...."

Alexander Magruder II died in Calvert County, Maryland in 1677 when he was 67 years old.

Samuel Magruder was Alexander's eldest son, born in 1654. He married Sarah Beall around the year 1684 and had twelve children — seven sons and five daughters, whose names were Samuel II (ancestor of our line), Ninian, John, James, William, Alexander, Nathaniel, Elizabeth, Sarah, Verlinda, Mary and Eleanor. Like his father, he became a very wealthy landowner.

Samuel Magruder I was very much involved in his community, politics and the military. He was active in his church and parish, St. Paul's, and some of the positions he held in his lifetime include Civil and Military Officer (High Justice and Captain of Militia) for Prince George Co., Gentleman Justice, Member of the House of Burgesses, Commissioner for His Majesty, Commander-In-Chief of Maryland Forces, and Lieutenant of Lord Baltimore's Yacht or Vessel of War the "Loyall Charles". He was 57 years old when he died in 1711.

Samuel's wife, Sarah, may have been a daughter or relative of Ninian Beall, another prominent Scotsman in the area. However, there is also evidence that a girl with her name immigrated from Scotland in 1675. Sarah died in 1734, outliving her husband by 23 years. Sarah's Christian faith was likely also very important to her, as her will declares:

"In the name of God, Amen, I Sarah Magruder of Prince Georges County in the Province of Maryland, Widow, being well and in health of body and of sound disposing mind and Memory, praised be allmighty God therefore Considering the Certainty of Death and the Uncertainty of the time thereof, do make and declare these present for and in my last Will and testament in manner and form following. That is to say, first & principally my Soul I recommend into the hands of allmighty God my Creator who gave it trusting & assuredly believing that in and through the alone merits and mediation of my

blessed Saviour and redeemer Jesus Christ, to obtain free pardon and forgiveness of all
my sins and life Everlasting in the World to Come....”

Samuel Magruder II was born about 1687 in Calvert County. He married Eleanor Wade, daughter of Robert Wade and Elizabeth Sprigg. Samuel's younger brother Alexander also married Eleanor's sister, Anne Wade. Samuel II and Eleanor had seven children: Samuel Jr., Robert, Zachariah, Elias (ancestor of our line, born either 1713 or 1726), Elizabeth, Josiah and William.

Elias Magruder and his wife Susannah were the parents of Thornton Thomas Magruder, born about 1750. Thomas married Priscilla Beall, great-granddaughter of John Beall and Verlinda Magruder, a daughter of Samuel I. Thomas and Priscilla along with his parents moved to Culpepper County, Virginia. They had at least eight children, including Ruth, Josiah, William Nathaniel, Priscilla, Elias, Eleanor, Dennis and Ann. According to *Magraders in America* by Sue Emerson, “Thomas was remembered by the name “Goliath” which either indicates that he was a large man or that he was very strong.” He died young at only 38 years of age in 1788, leaving all of his possessions to his wife Priscilla until she died in 1815.

William Nathaniel Magruder, born in 1776, married Jemima Sutherland in 1799 in Culpepper County, Virginia. They moved west along with many of their family members, settling in Shelby County, Kentucky. Their children were Nathaniel, Travis, Willis Jackson (I), Sarah, Elizabeth, Nancy, William, Thomas and Dennis.

Willis Jackson (I), born 1804, and his wife Elizabeth Ann Armstrong, born 1811, eventually settled in Missouri. Their son, William Henry, born 1839, married Sarah Jane Weatherford. They were the parents of Willis Jackson (II), born 1965. He and his wife Mary Virginia Kidwell were the parents of Charles Franklin Magruder, the father of our own Willis Jackson Magruder.

Our MacGrouther Line

14. James (Seumas) McGrouther I (? late 1400s to mid 1500s)
married ?
13. James (Seumas) McGrouther II (? 1500s)
married Margaret Drummond (?)
12. Alexander (Alasdair) MacGruder I (1569 - 1609 or 1617)
married Margaret Campbell (1571-?)
11. Alexander (Alasdair) Magruder II, immigrant to America (abt 1610 - abt 1677)
married Margaret Braithewaite (1638-1659)
10. Samuel Magruder I (abt 1654 - 1711)
married Sarah Beall (abt 1658 - 1734)
9. Samuel Magruder II (abt 1687 - abt 1779)
married Eleanor Wade (abt 1690 - abt 1729)
8. Elias Magruder (abt 1713 or 1726 - 1806)
married Susannah ?
7. Thornton Thomas Magruder (abt 1750 - 1788)
married Priscilla Beall (abt 1754 - abt 1815 or 1821)
6. William Nathaniel Magruder (1776-1851)
married Jemima Southerland (1780-1863)
5. Willis Jackson Magruder (1804-1885)
married Elizabeth Ann Armstrong (1811-1875)
4. William Henry Magruder (1839-1914)
married Sarah Jane Weatherford (1844-1889)
3. Willis Jackson Magruder (1865-1944)
married Mary Virginia Kidwell (1872-1963)
2. Charles Franklin Magruder (1891-1966)
married Jewell Maud Wood (1900-1984)
1. Willis Jackson Magruder (1935-)
married Sue Lee Brimer (1932-)

Some Later MacGrouther Tales

Back in Scotland, the MacGrouthers continued to fight on the side of King Charles II, who returned to the throne in 1660. He was succeeded by his son, James II, in 1685. However, James II was overthrown in 1688 by William the Prince of Orange. This was devastating to the Drummonds, who had risen to a position of power and had practically governed Scotland while James II was King. *Wha's Like Us?* states the following:

“The fall from power was swift. Lord Drummond was seized by the victorious Covenanting party as a particular object of their hatred and imprisoned for five years in Stirling Castle. This afterwards brought exile to France for the Drummonds, and the effect on their tenants of fighting on the losing side must have been equally catastrophic.”

During the reign of William and Mary, the removal of Episcopalianism was attempted in Scotland. Although many Episcopalian ministers who refused to comply with William and Mary were officially relieved of their profession, many continued to serve their congregations in secret. One of these ministers was a man by the name of George McGruther. Graduating from St. Leonard's College and the University of Saint Andrews, he became a minister and Presbytery Clerk in 1670. However, he lost his position in 1689. According to *Wha's Like Us?*, this was “for not reading the Proclamation of the Estates, and not praying for their Majesties William and Mary.” Instead, “[h]e was accused of praying for the happy restoration of King James, and for the confusion of his enemies.” Despite the poverty he experienced after the loss of his job, he continued preaching secretly in houses and meeting places and was supported by the people in his parish in Perthshire.

King James II was determined to regain his throne, and throughout the next few decades many there were many uprisings in his favor, the biggest one occurring in 1715. The MacGrouthers were involved in all of these, naturally as Jacobites — supporters of King James. These revolts were ill-fated, however, and none restored James, who died in 1724, to his throne.

James' son Charles, known to the Scots as “Bonnie Prince Charlie,” continued the attempted revolution in 1745. The MacGrouthers were involved in this as well, and one MacGrouther man's story is particularly interesting.

Alexander McGruther of Dalcrui was the great great grandson of John McGruther 1st of Meigor, who was Alexander Magruder the immigrant's uncle. He participated in the uprising of 1715, where he was captured and imprisoned in England. However, he was released two years later, and he returned to his home in Scotland. By 1745, he was an old man, being 72 years old, yet he went back to war along with his son, also named Alexander.

The Scottish forces under Bonnie Prince Charlie saw several victories before they marched to England to seize Carlisle Castle. The castle surrendered to the Scottish forces, but less than two months later the English were able to retake it, and many of the Scottish soldiers were taken prisoner, including the two Alexanders. The younger Alexander died a year later in prison, but the elder Alexander held on for four years in prison against all odds, despite being twice sentenced to death for treason.

At his first trial, which was well-recorded, Alexander pleaded not guilty. Witnesses were brought in to testify both for and against him, and it is interesting to note their conflicting stories. According to the defense, Alexander did not want to be involved in the



Carlisle Castle, England

rebellion but was forced by the Duke of Perth to go. As tenant to the Duke, he had no other choice; refusing would destroy his family's welfare. Other witnesses, however, painted a very different picture of Alexander. According to *Wha's Like Us?*, the King's counsel noted the strangeness of the fact that

“a man forced into the rebel army should continue so long in it, accept of a commission, and act as an officer, and that it was proved that when the rebels got possession of Edinburgh he was with them in a highland dress, a white cockade in his blue bonnet, a dirk and pistols in his girdle, and was very vigilant and active, encouraging the rebel officers to be hearty in the cause, and not to doubt success; that he acted at the battle of Prestonpans as a lieutenant; that he marched with the rebels into England; and that when Carlisle surrendered to the Duke, he acknowledged himself to be a lieutenant in Perth's regiment....”

The Counsel convicted Alexander of treason, and, considering the MacGrouthers' history of religious and political inclinations, it seems likely that they were right.

Inexplicably, though, Alexander seems to have escaped his sentence. One by one, the officers imprisoned with him were hung, drawn and quartered, but each time Alexander's execution was imminent, he got a reprieve for a few more weeks. Finally, it was decided that instead of execution, he would be banished for life. But “Old MacGrowther,” as he was called, was suffering from so much illness and rheumatism when it was time for him to board the ship that the officials decided to leave him behind with the assumption that he would not survive long. He soon recovered to full health, however, and his spirit seems to have suffered little. Every time the officials came to ask if he was feeling able to go, he would reply that he was not ready quite yet. In this way he was able to avoid his banishment.

It wasn't long before “Old MacGrowther” was well-known in the community and much admired for his good-heartedness and spunk. Finally, in 1749, some influential citizens were able to convince the authorities to release him, and Alexander, now 76 years old, went back home to Scotland.

Another MacGrouther who was involved in the 1745 uprising was one Duncan McGrouther, who was written about in the *Stirling Observer* in 1849. By the mid-1800s the perceptions of many English and Lowland Scots regarding the Highlanders and the Jacobites had completely reversed. Just a century before there had been great contempt for the Highlanders and attempted eradication of their culture, but the pervading romantic sensibilities of the time had caused that to be replaced with a particular fascination and admiration of their way of life. The following is the article from the *Stirling Observer*, entitled “Auchterarder — Relic of the Forty-Five”:

“It is now more than a hundred years since Scotland’s mountains echoed to the rebellious strains of the bagpipe, and all the heroes of these chivalrous times have long since slept with their fathers. But there is living here, neither blind nor tottering with age, John, son of Ensign Duncan McGrouther, who followed Prince Charles in all his unfortunate campaign, down to the fatal battle of Culloden; and his hair-breadth escapes, by flood and field, formed the theme of many a winter night’s conversation, and heart thrilling story, told by the old in this neighbourhood. Duncan contrived to ellude the vigilance of his pursuers, and, leaving his native highland home, he became an extensive farmer at Kinkell, on the fertile banks of the Earn. He was a man of extraordinary dimensions, combining agility with strength, and intellect with practical sense. He was a complete master at the broadsword, and the old people were wont to say that he was a stately, soncy-looking auld man, and they had ne’er seen his ‘marrow’ with the exception of ‘Muckle Samuel the Sutherland Fencible.’ Even in age he was ‘straight as a rash.’ While living in Kinkell Mrs McGrouther favoured him with sixteen children, of whom John still survives. He followed the humble, but in his younger days profitable, occupation of a

country-weaver, and in his youth married Jean, daughter of James Black, who also bore a part in the Culloden engagement, as a private soldier in the royal army. John is now a widower, and lives with his only remaining child, Mrs McFarlane, who is still a young woman, and the mother of a happy family. She resembles our illustrious Queen in being the descendant or grandchild of two hostile warriors.”

In the 1740s and 1750s, Scottish lairds began to look for ways to more efficiently make money off of their land. In accordance with this effort, an extensive review of the properties in Glen Artney was conducted in 1753. It provides an interesting look into what many MacGrouthers’ lives must have been like at the time. Here are a few excerpts, taken from *Wha’s Like Us?*:

“Glenartney: A highland country. Their cattle and sheep not good. They ruin their stocking by summer grazing oxen from the low country. There is a great quantity of ground capable of improvement which now consists of hanging spouty soil and bears a coarse blew grass....”



“The men are generally employed here in looking after their cattle, labouring their farms, and assisting the women to dress their lint. There are severals of them that have begun now to slaughter some sheep and beeves and carry them to Crieff every Thursday, which is the weekly market day there, to sell. This continues with them from the end of June to about Candlemas.”

“The hills in this part of the estate

are extremely barren except in Glenartney, where the hills produce pretty good grass.... But these hills ly so high that there is little good got out of them, except for four months of the year, so that... [one must] make the most of them during the time the cattle can stand on them.”

“There are two or three bridges very much wanted in this part of the country, particularly at Achinner, where they are hemmed in betwixt two waters, and it has been known that dead corpses have been kept for some days without burial when there was a speat in these waters and they could not got over them to the place of internment. These waters, besides the inconveniences and interruptions to trading and commerce, are very dangerous, and the parish minister says he has been frequently in danger of being drowned on them when he has being going about examining his parishioners.”

“There is no sort of commerce or any manufactures carried on in this part of the



estate other than spinning of linen yarn, of which they sell large quantities in the town of Crieff, and is the staple commodity they have for the making of money.”

“The houses on this part of the estate are tolerably good and built with stone and mortar.”

“The laws prohibiting the highland dress and wearing of arms have taken effectual place in this part of the country.”

“By both ends of Lochearn and through the Forrest of Glenartney used to be the common road for thieves and disorderly people to come from the Highlands into the skirts of the low country to steal.... No depredations or thefts have been committed on these lands of late years.”

“There are three schools... one at Craigneich.”

“The English language has made great progress... and the people in general are quiet and honest... but cannot be commended for their industry in any one thing but watering their grounds and spinning of linen yarn... which they bring to Crieff to market. They are generally very poor.”



During the Highland Clearances that followed this time, many Scottish lairds no longer found the old system of tenantry to be an efficient means of making money. As a consequence, an enormous number of Highland families, including many MacGrouthers, were forced to migrate to the Lowland cities to find work. This was the end of the Highland way of life for many people. Clans became scattered, and the Gaelic language and culture dwindled until it was found only in the islands and the most northern and western parts of the mainland.

The book *Wha's Like Us?* contains many interesting glimpses into MacGrouther lives through records. While most of them are births, deaths and marriages, some of them are quite out of the ordinary. One rather humorous example is the following, quoted from *Wha's Like Us?*:

“Among the prisoners admitted to Inveraray Jail on 9 March 1844 was John MacGrowther, gamekeeper, age 21, single, born Largs. It is narrated that he reads well but writes with difficulty, that this was his first time in prison, and he was sentenced to 60 days in jail where his conduct therein is described as good. ‘In the company of friends MacGrowther partook of spirits and he was not altogether sober. Proceeding towards Cherry Park they were overtaken at the crossroads by Robert Alexander Lemon and a fight ensued, for no great reason.’ MacGrowther was found guilty of assault and biting.”

There are thousands of fascinating stories to be found among the American descendants of Alexander Magruder. These are compiled in *Magraders in America* by Sue Emerson. There are too many to recount here, but a few notes will serve as a small overview:

- An enormous amount of Alexander Magruder's descendants served in the military. In the Revolutionary War they were always patriots, and during the Civil War the majority served on the side of the South.
- Many American Magraders were also involved in the government, holding positions as congressmen, ambassadors and even governors. One of Alexander Magruder's

descendants through his son Alexander III, Julia Boggs Dent, became First Lady of the United States as the wife of Ulysses S. Grant.

- Some other common professions included physicians, ministers, teachers and professors, merchants and lawyers. Many, like Alexander Magruder, were wealthy plantation owners or farmers.

- American Magruders moved throughout the country, most commonly to the South and west. Many settled in the Deep South, while many others went west to West Virginia, Kentucky and Missouri, or even farther to the gold rush in California. One descendant, Isaac Constant (1809-1890), took the Oregon Trail west with his wife Lucinda and his children. He became a farmer in the Rogue River Valley in Oregon. Tensions with the Indians were high in this area, but Isaac was rare in that he treated them with kindness. When he learned that they were starving one winter, he showed them where he planted his potatoes so that they could take some whenever they had need. Also, the story is told that when a man bragged to Isaac about murdering an Indian boy, Isaac got so upset that he ran back to the house to get his gun. The man was wise and ran away before he got back. In return for his compassion, Isaac and his family were left in peace when the Indians attacked the ranches in the valley during the Indian Wars.

- Alexander's descendants included many strong, courageous women who followed their dreams despite the conventions of the time. One woman from Mississippi, Maggie Hill Barry (1863-1945), obtained her masters degree, studied throughout Europe, and became an instructor in music and modern languages at several colleges. After moving to Texas to work at North Texas Female College in 1888, she made efforts to improve the way of life of rural women. She also championed agricultural colleges, which she hoped would keep young people from having to migrate to the cities.

- One of the descendants of Alexander through his son Samuel was Helen Magruder. Many people in her family fought in the Civil War, and after it was over they moved away from their home in Virginia, first going to Canada. While they were there, Helen met Lord William Frederick Scarlett, third Baron Abinger, a Scottish laird. They married and Helen moved with her new husband to Inverlochy Castle in the Scottish Highlands, where she became known as Lady Abinger. She was very generous and kind and was well-loved by her servants and the tenantry. While on a visit to the Highlands in 1873, Queen Victoria stayed at Inverlochy with Lord and Lady Abinger and their family, and recorded her pleasant impression of them in her diary.



Inverlochy Castle

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