

MAJOR JOHN MACDONALD,
SELECTIONS FROM HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY.



I.

FOR some time we had in our possession an old manuscript, the ink of which is so faded, and the paper so yellow and worn, that it is with no little difficulty we are able to decipher it. It is the autobiography, in his own handwriting, of a Highland soldier, John Macdonald, who rose from the ranks to be a major in the army. The various incidents of his career, and the numerous adventures he met with are so interesting, that we make no apology for making the following selections. He accompanied his regiment to Flanders, fought under George the Second at the battle of Dettingen, and had his full share of the hardships of that memorable campaign; was at the battle of Fontenoy, where he received three wounds; was ordered home with his regiment to quell the Rising in Scotland in 1745; but on arriving at Stafford information came of Prince Charles's retreat from Derby, when Macdonald's regiment was again ordered for foreign service. He was engaged at the battle of Prague, and, after peace was concluded, served in Gibraltar; then returned home on recruiting service. In 1759 he secured a commission as Ensign in a regiment raised by the Earl of Sutherland. In January 1763 he obtained a Lieutenancy in the regular army; but in March of the same year his regiment was reduced, and he again retired to Sutherland and took to farming. When the American War of Independence broke out, he again joined the army, although then in his 56th year, and took with him his son, aged only fifteen, to serve as a volunteer. He was appointed to the 42nd Highlanders, and served all through the war with distinction. At length, after serving for forty-three years, and attaining to the rank of Major, he settled down in his native county to spend the remainder of his days in peace.

The first few pages have altogether disappeared, but we gather from a pedigree at the end of the manuscript, that John Macdonald came of a respectable family in Sutherlandshire. In August 1739,

we find him—a young lad—in company with a cousin, William Macdonald, engaged in driving some cattle to Moinbuy, to deliver them to a dealer who had previously bought them. After fulfilling their task, the two lads, being tired and hungry, went to the inn at Balchragan to obtain some refreshment. On arriving they found the inn full of soldiers—a recruiting party of the 32nd, or Colonel Deseurey's Regiment of Foot, under the command of Lieutenant John Munro. In the servant of this gentleman the lads recognised a distant relation, so that they were soon quite at home. The sergeant of the party, seeing two such likely lads, wished to enlist them, but this John Macdonald at least had no intention of doing. How he was at last entrapped, we will leave himself to tell in his own words.—

“Meantime (as I found afterwards) William hinted to his friend that he would list if I could be got to go with him. But they found this could never be brought about by fair means, therefore fell on the only scheme that could favour their purpose, viz., using the bottle freely, and I became so intoxicated that I did not recollect my crossing the water; but when I came to my senses I found myself in the inn at Culrain surrounded by military men and uniforms. I got up much disordered in body and worse in mind, went to a stream to wash, and taking out my pocket-handkerchief to dry my hands and face, half-a-crown dropped out of it. Though there were many to spy how I would behave, none were then very near me but my cousin William. I expressed my surprise at seeing the half-crown there, as I did not keep my money so loose in those days, when he immediately told me that was the money I got from the Captain. I then, with great concern, asked him whether it was given, or put in my pocket. He said I might remember that I took it cheerfully to serve his Majesty. I asked him then if he would say so before a Justice of Peace, and was answered, to be sure he would. My next question was—Are you listed, too? and was answered in the affirmative. Then musing a little, it occurred to me that since he was against me, I had now no evidence on my side, and, therefore, had better submit to my hard fate, than provoke (to no purpose but torment and ill usage to myself) those who had me entirely in their power, and had a colour of law on their side, and then I went with him to the company with as much spirits as one in the utmost despair could feign. But my cousin William did not escape the drunken farce, having fallen and hurted his knee so much that he could go no further than Kincarden. This was another mortifying circumstance to poor despairing me; but I saw no remedy. I then went quietly with the party to the

house of Newmore, where we found one of the most cheerful landlords in the universe at the door with a magnum of brandy, and drank to the poor penitent to whom he handed the first bumper, though there were two sergeants and eighteen good recruits present. We were then conducted to the dining-room, where we got a most sumptuous supper, with plenty of strong ale and punch, which went merrily round, every one drinking to poor miserable me; but all entreaty was in vain, having formed a steady resolution to keep in my senses for the future.

"At bedtime I was shown with the most alert serjeant to one of the best beds. In the morning the Captain's principal servant came in with the brandy bottle, took a bumper, and began with pilgarlic to put it round. But I was the only person in the company that did not turn up the bottom of the glass.

"After a good breakfast we were paraded to march to Inverness, when I stepped out of the rank, and telling the Captain if he meant I should be a soldier, I hoped he would not take every advantage of my folly, and put me off with half-a-crown listing money, to which he answered—my good lad, the serjeant will give you a guinea and half-a-crown, when you arrive at Inverness. Thus their suspicions continued, but we got to Inverness that evening, and we were led to a canteen kept by Serjeant M'Bride, and everyone but myself drank heartily till the garrison regulations made it necessary to retire to the barracks."

Thus, through an act of folly, the life of John Macdonald was completely changed. Instead of the quiet uneventful existence he had hitherto led, he had at once launched upon a career of adventure, danger, and excitement. In place of the modest well-conducted companions of his youth, he was now thrown into daily association with some of the roughest and most unscrupulous men, even of that profligate age. No wonder that our young, piously-brought-up Highlander should have been horrified on his first experience of the amenities of a barrack room. This is his description of his first night in the Castle of Inverness—

"Hitherto, I had seen nothing of the army, but what was tolerable, and rather decent. But, behold! I was shown to a room where there were four soldiers three-fourths drunk, playing at cards, cursing, swearing, d——ing one another, the cards, their own limbs, eyes, and joints. Then, indeed, had there been open doors, I certainly would have taken to my heels, but that benefit was denied, the Castle gates being locked. I lay down, but could not sleep for the noise these wretches made, and the dread of the barracks sinking with them. At last I slumbered, but was soon wakened by a dreadful weight coming thump across me. I

started up, and found this to be one of my room-mates, knocked atop of me by another who fell out with him at the cards, the other two being seconds to see fair play. It is easier to conceive than describe the figure I made, standing in my shirt against the wall like a statue, meantime one of the seconds taking notice of me, desired me to lie down, as he would take care they should keep the middle of the floor and molest me no more. He was as good as his word, and the battle was soon over, as well as my rest for that night. This was a sample of my future companions."

At the time young Macdonald joined the army Highlanders were looked upon with great suspicion on account of their known loyalty to the exiled Stuarts. Jacobitism was a part of their creed, which, born with them, grew with their growth, and though it received a check in the failure of the Rising of 1715, it smouldered until it again burst forth in a flame in 1745. In consequence of this veiled antipathy to the Government, Highlanders who joined the army were treated more like conquered rebels than comrades of their fellow soldiers. This unfair treatment so irritated our high-spirited Highlander that he determined to desert. We shall give his own quaint description—

"But every one had tolerable quarters but the poor Highlanders, treating the serjeants and corporals was not sufficient to save them from being insulted and abused. The worst and most ignominious names was the common manner of addressing them, such as Highland savages, negroes, yahoos, &c., from the Adjutant to the meanest and most blackguard drummer, this was the usage in that regiment at that time; but glory to Him that spared me to see decency and sobriety prevail in that worthy corps, and the highest esteem for my countrymen all over the known world. Next summer we removed to Fort-William, and my cousin fell ill, and I was so fretted with bad usage for the very cause (my country) which should have created esteem, that I consented with James Gunn (alias Piper) from the parish of Golspie to desert. But finding our finances rather low, we put off our design to a day appointed; before that day, Gunn fell ill, and though my treatment did not mend, I began seriously to reflect on desertion as a bad change, as my case then must be similar to the old gentlemen who was frightened at the rustling of the leaves on the trees. Soon after this I was placed in another mess where I was more comfortable. The corporal of my mess was a man of knowledge and humanity. He was a great reader, and sat many hours to hear me read books of his own procuring, afterwards making me understand what I read. He valued me for

my inclination to learning, and resolution to sobriety, though he could not keep from drink himself, except by what the soldiers called 'bagging,' that is, swearing not to drink for so long a time. His name was Edward Holloway, born in Dublin; and had it not been for that failing, he might be an honour to any country. I should have observed that my friend Holloway chose me and my countrymen his room mates, and one Hamilton, a countryman of his own, who was reputed a great boxer. Poor old Ned having drank too long and hard in September, 'bagged' till Christmas-Day, when we insisted on enjoying ourselves with him in our barrack-room, and went by turns for drink. After some had got merry, it fell to my turn to fetch more; when I came back I found a Munro from the parish of Creich, a room mate, at this room door, bleeding at the mouth and nose, and I asking him how that happened, was answered that Hamilton had fallen on him without any provocation. I then asked Hamilton how he came to abuse the poor fellow so. This was answered, with an oath, that he would use every Highland negro in the house in the same manner. I told them it was my turn to begin. The word was strip; there was no alternative but that, or suffering a continued abuse which had exhausted my patience to such a degree that death appeared preferable to living in such slavery; therefore, without the least hesitation, I began to cast off. Meantime comes in another corporal who was hunting for drink, and seeing us in this posture, put on a countenance of authority, ordering us both to the guard-house as prisoners, at the same time whispering to me in friendship that I had better not venture the battle, as Hamilton was such an expert boxer that he would certainly beat me. I answered, with thanks, that I found myself so often abused by some that had not half my strength that I must perforce practise that art, and though he might confine us for a time, how soon released, I would try what this braggart could do; and, indeed, he was at that instant boasting, threatening, and alleging that I was making interest with the corporal not to allow us fight. The corporal being irritated at this impudent falsehood, told him that he would not only allow the battle, but stand by to see fair play. This permission put us both in buff in a moment, and falling on, I found my antagonist very alert, but mostly to little purpose, as I had him flat to the ground whenever I hit him. Few hits did the business: being once down, and stunned, he was ordered, but would not get up, and he was then declared beaten, which he owned; but afterwards he swore if he had room enough I would find beating him harder work, for all my extraordinary strength. This was my first engagement of this kind, and I found it the first step to make the blackguards keep their distance, and to some respect among my comrades; and being now grown to such a size that

such as knew me to have any degree of courage did not choose to provoke me to a quarrel."

Having thus asserted himself, Macdonald soon found his life more bearable. He began to take an interest and pride in his profession, and his sobriety, and general good conduct recommended him to the favour of his officers. Another circumstance occurred at this time which raised his thoughts from the hardships of his present condition, and buoyed him up with visions of future happiness. Our hero fell in love, but in describing such a momentous affair we must again use his own words.—

"A namesake and relation of Macdonald of Keppoch lived in Maryburgh [Fort-William]. I frequented his house, and there met with a niece of his, lately come from the house of Glengarry where she had been from her childhood, her father dying when she was young, and being a relation and a great favourite of the Laird's, she was brought up with his children until this term, when she left that family with a very prudent character. On meeting her so often at her uncle's, I could not suppress an impulse very natural at my time of life at the sight of perfect innocence, and no small degree of beauty; but however strong my inclination, reason suggested that should I succeed to my wishes (which I then had no ground to expect), I must bring hardships on myself, and misery on the only person in the world whose happiness I wished most; and therefore, except what was altogether unintelligent to my innocent favourite, I made no attempt to explain myself at this time."

In June 1741, his regiment was ordered to Edinburgh, when Colonel Husk succeeded to the command. This worthy man made many alterations and improvements, and among other things, he showed attention to the Highlanders, and put a stop to the abuse and brutality with which they were formerly treated. Here, too, Macdonald had the good fortune of again meeting with his lady love.—

"My dear Janet had an aunt at Edinburgh, who hearing of her good qualities, and of her leaving the family of Glengarry, sent for her, and she was not long in town till I found her out. And now the struggle between reason and inclination became high; but it was decided by predestination, and I became possessor of her, that was more calculated for to ride in a coach than to carry a knapsack, and I had leisure to reflect for many years that I should have listened to the voice which would have

prevented the many hardships she underwent, and my sufferings on account of a tender delicate person whom I esteemed above the rest of the world."

After his marriage, Macdonald had a few months of almost perfect happiness, which was only too soon disturbed by his regiment being ordered for foreign service. His wife having obtained permission to follow him, they left Edinburgh for London in 1742. His description of the state of the army, and his own sufferings is so graphic that we give it in extenso.—

"After we reached London we were reviewed by King George the Second, embarked, and landing in a few days at Ostend, lay that winter in Bruges, in the course of which I suffered much by fevers and agues, particularly five weeks in the Town Hospital, where my wife was only allowed to see me from eight to nine in the morning. Early in the spring of 1743, the army, under the command of the Earl of Stairs, marched for Germany, and now began the misery of a married man. Cheerfully did I carry my wife's clothes with my own, and happy was I when she could keep up with the regiment; but it happened often otherwise.

"On this route we marched through Ghent, Brussels, and Aix-la-Chappell, and after crossing the Rhine, we encamped near Frankfort, then crossing the river on the 29th of May, took up ground on which we expected to fight a pitched battle with the French the next day. But they avoided it, and made full speed for the bridge at Aschaffenburg. This pass being of great consequence, Lord Stairs ordered a brigade with the utmost expedition to it, and they had only taken possession, when the enemy appeared in sight. Our people having no baggage or provisions, how soon the necessary guard were posted those off duty went to the adjacent houses and villages, and, without the least ceremony, took what they thought proper. The second day after, King George as well as the rest of the army came up, having pitched no tents for three days. The army had no provisions, nor was any furnished in these days but bread, for which the men paid out of the three shillings a-week; as to blankets or anything of the nature of donations they were terms entirely unknown, on the contrary, the waistcoats for next year was made out of the rags of last year's coats, the skirts of which were unaccountably long in order to cover the body when the man lay in his tent, with his feet in the coat sleeves.

"At this time the enemy took three days bread of ours coming up the River Maine from Frankfort. Now the whole army was in the utmost want of provisions, except the most desperate

villains who would plunder at any rate ; but now had an excuse for such disorders, these began, and the country people fled with their effects, so that the army was on the brink of ruin, in so far that the best men, to save their lives, were obliged to venture forth at the risk of being hanged. A village near the King's quarters suffered the most, and there was a guard ordered to protect it, amongst these I made one. How soon the marauders found we were come, they made off leaving some of their prey in the hurry. Next morning with other things there was found a large sow, dead, which the inhabitants gave to the guard, one of the Scotch Fusiliers, a butcher, cut it up and boiled it, hair and all, in a copper kettle. One of the 33rd Regiment and myself being sentries during this operation had liked to be too late, the pork being all gone before we were relieved, except one pieec which the butchering cook had called his own, swearing none else should taste of it. Meantime I laid hold of him and desired the man of the 33rd fish out the pork with his bayonet, which being complied with, and I recommending the cook in a proper manner to keep his distance, I followed my brother soldier and divided the welcome morsel, which few beggars in the world would look at without disgust. However, how soon I got it, my anxiety was to share it with my wife, so off I started, and getting leave from the officer of the guard, went immediately to camp with the half, and left it with her and another woman, the only persons in that tent. The second day after, being relieved from guard, I found no victuals at home, nor did I bring any. My wife was big with her first child, the husband of the other woman being on guard could not relieve her, thus I saw four lives at stake, without the least remedy but my venturing my own at the greatest risk of death or severe punishment, there being general orders to call the roll of companies four times a day, and confine any absent, in order to be punished with rigour. The Quartermaster and rear guard had strict orders to make prisoners all with whom they found the least plunder. The Provost-Marshal had his warrant to hang to the next tree, any found out of the limits of the camp. What a shocking situation ! none of us having hardly broke our fast that day, nor the least appearance of any provision for the next, thus death appeared to me in different shapes, but the dread of losing my wife prompted me to venture for the sake of provision, rather than lose a life for want of it, and, according, I, with fourteen other men, passed the rear guard one by one in the dusk of that evening, and away to the country, through several villages, but could not find anything eatable. Thus we went on farther from camp till twelve o'clock next day, when the men found some good wine, a little flour, and some shelled walnuts ; and I found a live goose. Now the

consequences of absence beginning to frighten me, I went frequently to the wine bibbers, begging they would return, as to be sure, the longer absent, the greater the crime; but to no purpose, none could be prevailed upon but one man, and a boy, a drummer, with whom I turned my face to the camp. But what a dreadful prospect! The Provost on the road with his guard and instrument, the camp surrounded with sentries, and if by any chance I got past all the dangers, I could not escape whipping; being absent from three roll calls. But behold! the extraordinary care of providence, I getting past the greater danger to the rear of the camp, sent the drummer for the women, they smuggled the goose, &c., under their petticoats to the tent, and to complete my happiness, assured me that I had not been missed, as there had not been an officer, serjeant, or corporal off duty that day to call the roll of my company. But though I escaped so lucky that time, I never tried my fortune in that way after, and hope that I am excusable before God and the world, for what nothing but the extreme of want could make me guilty of. My wife soon uncased the goose, and only dressed the half, and when that was done my wife observed that Willie Angus and Donald Macdonald were lying sick in one of the tents, and, perhaps, starving for want of food. I could not help smiling at such an unseasonable design of charity; but would not check such a good disposition, therefore cutting what was ready in two, allowed her to indulge her kind intention, certain that no commission could make her happier. She found them so ill that they had a whole loaf of the last bread they had received, which being instantly cut, she returned with the most part of it, and such joy, as always accompanies good actions, and, indeed, the bread she brought was worth more than the half of the goose."

Soon after this painful episode, the army received supplies, and our hero was never again reduced to similar extremities. His intelligence and steadiness brought him under the notice of the Major of his regiment, with whom he soon became a great favourite. An incident now occurred which brought him great applause, but we must allow himself to tell it.—

"One day I was ordered on command under the Earl of Rothes; his lordship detached my Major with a party to the village of Dettingen. The Major halted, and having reconnoitred the ground about his post, ordered eleven sentries to be planted, but on going to a rising ground beyond his sentries, he observed the enemy's cavalry fording the River Maine, and forming. Returning quickly to his party, the Major called for the next man to go sentry. Twelve being my number, I followed him till he stopped on the height, at an apple tree. He then looking steadfastly at

me, asked several questions respecting my knowledge of service, to which I made such answers as induced him to give me orders to be attentive to the motions of the enemy, particularly if they moved towards me, and that I judged his party sufficient to engage them, I should keep my post and fire at them at a considerable distance, and he would take this as a sign to advance with his party ; but if I judged them too many, I was to quit my post without firing, join, and report what I had seen. He then desired me to repeat my orders, which being done to his satisfaction, he told me that though I was young he had confidence in my conduct, on which the safety or ruin of his party much depended.

The enemy having increased to three considerable bodies, moved towards where I stood. I was at no loss how to act agreeable to my orders ; but being at a distance, I did not think proper to leave my post too soon, as they might halt, or take another course, and not disturb me or my party. But they continued the same road, regular and slow. All of a sudden three Hussars sprung from the party next me, and one of them made full speed to where I stood. I attempted making for my party, but before I got any distance, looking behind, and being frightened at the appearance of such a desperado, I thought my only method to escape being cut to pieces was to go back to the tree. There we met, and I must admit to my shame that what should have been done in an instant, took up some time, but it ended in a puff of applause which I was not conscious of meriting. However, the story went so high as the general officers, and a few days after, General Husk called on Major Stone, desiring to see the man of his company who behaved so well on his post when the French Hussar attacked him. When I appeared, the General said, 'Major, is this your great favourite, why don't you do better for him?' The Major answered tartly, 'I would long before now had I been his Colonel.' Husk, smiling, said to me, 'My lad, continue your good behaviour, and I give you your Colonel's word that you shall be down for the first opportunity that offers in my regiment.' This was flattering, but proved to be only the beginning of many disappointments, for in the very next action General Husk was so severely wounded that he had to give up his command. The new Colonel knew nothing of me, and so I remained the Major's favourite still."

(To be continued.)

SUPPLEMENT.—We again give four pages *extra* this month, to enable us to give Sir William Harcourt's speech, in the House of Commons, on the Crofter Question.

MAJOR JOHN MACDONALD.

SELECTIONS FROM HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

II.

ON the 16th of June 1743 was fought the battle of Dettingen, which George the 2nd gained over the French under the command of Marshall Noailles. No little surprise was expressed at the time, as well as by historians since, that the Earl of Stair should not have pursued the French to more advantage after the battle. Macdonald explains why this was not done. He says—

“Before the action began, we were ordered to quit our knapsacks. Mine was large enough, but it never encumbered me afterwards; though I, as well as a man of each sentry were sent in the evening to look after them. The loss of my own things I did not regret so much as the wife’s; even the baby’s clouts were gone. However, I got some beef and bread among the slain French, and a bundle of good straw, which saved her life that night; for a deluge of rain fell, and the tents of our company did not arrive till next morning. That day we marched to Hanau, where General Clayton was buried. This great officer, with Captain Campbell, were both killed by a cannon ball, just when the latter was delivering the Earl of Stair’s orders to pursue the flying enemy, who got off rather too well, before his lordship could know why his orders were not obeyed. Those who impute the escape of the French to any other cause, had better consider this as at least a more reasonable account; nor can any other be presumable.”

The army lay at Hanau for six weeks, during which time Macdonald’s first child was born, and, his wife not regaining her health for a time, he was obliged to try his hand at shopkeeping, on a small scale, in order to support her and the child—

“The regiment was again quartered for the winter at Bruges, and I found that the care of the child would employ the mother, and that both must be supported by my industry. Therefore, joining with another married man, I took a house, where our wives sold ale, and my comrade and I took bread from a baker at a small discount, and sold it at the different barracks as well as at home. Thus, by dint of industry, the little family was decently supported, and a small matter saved for the evil day.”

In this manner Macdonald and his wife passed the winter in

comfort, but when spring came the regiment was again on the march, and the soldier's troubles began. We select the following amusing account of the trials of a married private on the march—

“In the spring of 1744, the army, under the command of Marshal Wade, marched for Lisle. My poor wife having the fever and ague most of that campaign, obliged me often to carry the baggage, child, and all. One day in particular, we having pitched near Tournay, and in the evening having struck the tents when she was in the hot fit, I packed all on my back, slung the firelock, took the child in my arms, and marched with the company on the great road to Lisle. A little after it turned dark there was an order from the front to keep profound silence in the ranks. Meantime, my child, I suppose, being hungry and dry, began to roar, and the more I hushed it, the worse it cried, knowing that I was not the mother. The Captain of the division, knowing my situation, ordered me to stop till the mother came up, which I did, until I was challenged by the Captain of the next division, to whom I said that Captain Roper had ordered me to wait until I could find the mother to silence the child. He then swore at me for a cowardly scoundrel that wanted to skulk behind for fear, in consequence of the late order from the front. I, in great anguish of mind, answered that, by God I would not go behind a tree if all the French Army were within pistol shot of me. He, understanding the allusion, made towards me in a great rage with his spontoon, swearing he would run it through me if I did not go quickly to my rank, and he was quickly obeyed. Meanwhile a narrow defile in the front made a halt, and before we moved on again, the mother came up, and calm succeeded. The next morning the army encamped in a spacious field before Lisle. The day after, a detachment going to a place called Lenoy, the French lay in ambush for them, and the first man killed was my friend, the Captain, who would run his spontoon into me. I own he died with my consent, though I utterly detest what might have been imputed had I been there.”

While the army remained at Lisle, Macdonald again started a small beer-shop; but was not so fortunate as he had been at Bruges. By some means, not very clearly stated, their small store of money was either lost or stolen, and they were reduced to a few pence. How they bore this mishap, and how a comrade kindly helped them in their extremity, must be given in his own words—

“One day on my returning home I found two soldiers drink-

ing a mug of beer. When they had done, they gave my wife a small piece of silver to change. She, feeling her pocket, missed her purse; then, in a somewhat violent manner, asked me if I had it. I answered calmly in the negative. My manner of answering, as she thought, gave her reason to think that I had it, and she became very urgent to get it; but I finding the matter too serious, took the piece of silver from the men, went out, and got them their change, when they went away, when my wife pressing to get the purse from me, I asked her what she would do if she never saw it again. I was answered, '*go mad.*' I was now puzzled how to behave; but said if I had it, she need not be disturbed, and if it was never seen again, she must look on it as a trifling misfortune to such young people as us, who had already lived many happy days together on very little money, and might soon retrieve such a loss, and hoped she would not show a ridiculous weakness for what might be called nothing compared with many other disasters. Then having a little more command over herself, I soothed her a good deal; though the loss affected myself to a high degree, and staggered my prudent resolutions for some time. Our stock of money was now reduced to one half-penny, which I happened to have in my pocket, and the three-pence the soldiers had just paid for the beer. We had also the barrel near full of beer. But, as it often happens, one misfortune follows another. Late that evening our regiment got orders to march early next morning. Having but an indifferent night's rest, I was up early, and called on an acquaintance of the Welsh Fusiliers and told him to make his own use of the beer, as I had rather give it to a friend than leave it on the ground. He got up quickly, and instead of making a property of it, took it to the rear of our regiment then in ranks, and selling it a penny a quart cheaper than ordinary, before I moved off the ground, he brought me nine shillings and elevenpence which he had made of it. I can give no idea of my happiness in getting this timely relief, but will only say, that it enabled me to send my wife and child to Ghent, where they got a comfortable room. The weather turned out so bad, that had they been with me in camp, they must have suffered greatly, if not perished outright."

For the third time Macdonald's regiment was quartered at Bruges for the winter, and he resumed his shop-keeping. Besides selling beer and bread, he bought soldiers' old coats and other things, by which he could turn an honest penny. As there were several vacancies for non-commissioned officers at this time, Macdonald hoped to be promoted; but was again disappointed by General Skelton issuing a public order to the effect that neither Scotch nor Irish should be promoted to these vacancies

as long as there was an Englishman in the Company who was fit for the duty. In April 1745 the army left Bruges to march, under the command of the Duke of Cumberland, to the relief of Tournay, then besieged by the French. Before leaving the town, Macdonald hired a room of his brewer, in which he stored his stock-in-trade of second-hand clothing, as well as his wife's best things. For the account of the subsequent battle, where he was severely wounded, we shall again give his own graphic description—

“On the morning of the 1st of May 1745 we attacked the enemy in their works. Our regiment was broken and made up thrice. On going the first time, my right hand man, not liking the work, fell behind me, and sometimes hung on my haversack, where I had a little bread. I told him often to keep his rank or I would knock him down. This I did at last, and I saw no more of him during the action. There were fourteen in the front rank of platoons, going to the field, but on coming out, only another and myself; and I had three wounds. Yet, notwithstanding this, when the Earl of Crawford called a platoon of volunteers from the 32nd regiment to cover his troop of Life Guards, I was one of nineteen rank and file that turned out with Lieutenant Clark. His lordship having the honour of being last on the field, soon after sent an order to Lieutenant Clark to take his platoon off. While waiting for orders to rejoin our regiment, we, all being tired, sat down, and for the first time I began to examine my wounds, particularly one in my right thigh, where a ball had lodged, which troubled me very much. The Lieutenant, looking at me with surprise, asked how I could turn out a volunteer in such a condition, or even keep the field so long? I answered that I had no broken bones. When we received orders to join our corps I was so stiff that I had to hang on to a comrade until we came to the ground of our last encampment. Here orders were given to march directly, and the wounded were to be sent to the Duke's quarters; that being made a temporary hospital. My good friend, the Major, ordered me there, but I answered that I would rather go with my company. He said he knew my spirit was good, but that instead of being able to keep up with the rest I should be obliged to lie on the road, and, perhaps, before morning be cut to pieces by the French Hussars. Still I insisted on going with the company; then, in the old style, cursing my Highland blood, he ordered me to my rank. There I found the man I knocked down in the morning, and on my making objection to his being so near me, the Major, swearing vengeance against him as a cowardly scoundrel, took him to the colours to be under his

own eye in case of an engagement ; and that was the last I saw of Luke Beady, who deserted to the French the next morning. At dusk the army moved not only slow, but halting often, and as often I sat or lay down. At last I stopped altogether under a tree, and, overcome by fatigue, slept, though often disturbed by my wife, who, remembering what the Major had said about the French Hussars, wished me to move on. But all to no purpose, I neither could nor would stir until fair daylight, when the tracks of the army were easily seen, but nothing else. So I followed, hurrying on the road, till, the call of hunger being imperative, I detached the wife to a village at a little distance to get something to eat. A little while after, two men of the 42nd, who were left behind to bury a sergeant, came up, and they, knowing me, expressed their concern for my condition. I asked them if they could give me anything to eat. They answered no, but that they would try the neighbouring houses. They soon brought some eggs, milk, and beer. There I sat in the middle of the road until my wife arrived with bread, and then who dined better than my little family and I? Indeed, the child made such signs of joy at the sight of the eggs and milk as would divert me, had I lost a limb. After a while I again jogged on, and came up to the regiment, just as the Major was collecting the return of killed and wounded. How soon he saw me he mended his pace to meet me, and, in the most familiar manner, enquired how I did, adding that my folly proved lucky, as the Hospital was taken by the French and all stripped, but for all that I should have obeyed his orders, not only as his being my superior as an officer, but in experience ; and that I should distinguish myself by bravery, but never by madness, which he must call my following the army in my present condition. He then called the Surgeon to dress my wounds and extract the ball, which made me so uneasy. When it was taken out it seemed as if it had been too large for the piece from which it had been fired ; therefore it was beat to eight square, which made it very ragged, and as long as the first two joints of my little finger. Being now well attended, I was soon cured, although a wound on my right shoulder made that arm weaker ever since."

Though Macdonald appears to have been a very steady man, and a good soldier, there always seemed to be some obstacle to his obtaining the promotion which he undoubtedly deserved. He made sure of gaining a step after being wounded, but was again disappointed ; for his friend, the Major, having quarrelled with his Colonel, sold out, and retired from the service. He explains how he was passed over thus—

"Next morning I was ordered to the Grenadiers, having

now no Major to keep me out of them, nor was there an officer in that company that had the least knowledge of me. Meanwhile, Colonel Skelton got the 12th Regiment, and Colonel Wm. Douglas, the 32nd. A few days after, when I was away for forage, Colonel Douglas filled up all the vacancies for sergeants and corporals, without the least knowledge that such a man as me existed. A little time after, the enemy took Bruges, with my poor store, and many more valuables. Thus my poor family was a third time stripped of their little all. In the latter end of this season, the Rebellion being hot in Scotland, the foot regiments were all ordered home. Our regiment landed at Gravesend, marched for Dover, and soon marched back to Deptford, where we received orders to march North. Meantime, Macdowall of Garthland, Captain of Grenadiers, sent for me, and asked me, rather as a favour to take notice of his own and the company baggage on this march, as he was afraid that some of it might get lost through the neglect and drunkenness of the men in charge. I readily agreed, and this route was continued to Stafford, where we halted on St Andrew's Day."

Captain Macdowall was so well pleased with our hero, that thinking to do him a kindness, he offered him the place of batman, that is, to take care of and groom his riding horses, for which he would get extra pay, and be exempted from his ordinary duty. But the Highland blood of Macdonald could not bear the idea. He could be a soldier, but not a groom, so with many excuses he declined the offer. News arriving of the retreat of Prince Charles from Derby, Macdonald's regiment received orders to march to Croydon, he seeing after the baggage all the time. On giving up his charge to Captain Macdowall, the following conversation took place—

"I waited on my Captain with an inventory of the charge, and the key of the store-room, telling him all was safe, and that I thought nothing now hindered my returning to my ordinary duty. He asked me if keeping the key, and looking at the things now and then would interfere with my duty. I answered, not at all. He then told me Corporal Hart had deserted to the French, and asked if I would do that duty. I answered I would, if he thought proper. The Lieutenant-Colonel being present, said, 'Ay, Macdonald, you'll do Corporal's duty, though you did not choose to be batman.' This made me ask my Captain's pardon, I imagining him angry at me for refusing that office; but the Colonel observed there was no occasion for apology as the Captain was rather well pleased than otherwise to find such a spirit under such difficulties. Then commencing Lance-Corporal

on the 2nd January 1746. Some time in February there was a Corporal's rank vacant, but a dispute arising between the Major and Grenadier Captain, both candidates were disappointed ; I mean myself and another man, who was the Major's favourite. In July following the regiment went abroad again, and soon after I was really made Corporal, and Captain Macdowall's attachment to me increased daily. This year we fought the battle of Prague. The troops were ordered under arms an hour before daybreak. After this our regiment got Bromell for winter quarters, and my Captain going on recruiting service took me with him. When we arrived at Edinburgh there were orders from the War Office to enlist neither Scots nor Irish."

Mrs Macdonald being in delicate health, and tired of following the army, it was decided that she should go and live in Sutherlandshire, where their second child—a boy—was born. Mrs Macdonald, by her own industry, was able to support herself and children for over five years, during which time this attached couple never had an opportunity of meeting, which was a great trial to them both. Their boy died at the age of five years without his father ever having seen him. We will detail his further adventures in his own words.—

"I was ordered to Lieutenant George Farquhar at Leeds, who seemed very well pleased with my first trial on that duty. In April 1747 we joined the regiment at Bromell with the recruits, and soon after marched to camp, and fought the battle of Val, where a small ball broke the butt end of my firelock, when I had it at recover, ready to present. Had I had it in any other position, that ball must have gone through me. The latter end of this year our regiment was ordered home, and at first to winter at Kent, but after being as far as Gravesend, was ordered for Newcastle-on-Tyne. On this voyage I had several fevers, and nothing to drink but bad water, nor to eat but rusk (a sort of bread used by the Dutch Navy. It's something like sawdust, baked to look like biscuit.) The sergeants being allowed English biscuit, one of my comrades pleaded hard to get some for me to boil in water, but to no purpose. By-the-bye, the principal or Pay-Sergeant was a Mackenzie from Lochbroom, a man very capable of that office, had he kept his inferiors at proper distance ; but I observing to him often the evil consequences of such freedom, became a troublesome monitor, and, as is often the case, became the object of his ill-will, as appears by his cruelty in refusing me the biscuit. When we came to Newcastle, I was ordered to the Hospital, and, a little time afterwards, despaired of by the doctors ; but by the will of Providence I recovered ;

but in a great measure lost the use of my right arm, which was imputed to a wound I had in that shoulder at Fontenoy, and lying on that side on shipboard when the fever was so violent. Being thus rendered useless for service, my discharge was made out. When my Captain came from Scotland, and enquiring the state of his Corporal from the surgeon, and being told I was to be discharged, he went immediately to the Colonel, and desired leave to keep me for a season, even if it were at his own expense, to see if my arm would recover, and I mended so slow that I could not expect to be continued in the service, when a reduction of so many out of every regiment in the whole army was unavoidable." On the 1st of April 1748, the regiment embarked at Shields for the Netherlands, and settling a little at Ostend, we were clothed, at the delivery of which the Captain ordered me to assist the sergeants, so that nothing would be lost ; but in this my services were considered by them as officiousness, and Mackenzie asked me what business I had there, and his comrade and great crony, one Sergeant Clark, ordered me to get out, with which I complied, and, with tears in my eyes, observed to these gentry, that impunity for such rude address was, to their own knowledge, owing entirely to my misfortune. During this campaign peace was concluded ; thus kind Providence made this worthy man the instrument to prevent my falling on the smallest allowance under the Crown, and we were ordered home. Meantime the regiment landed at Harwich, and, I being an invalid, was ordered with sick and baggage by water to London, and from thence to Reading in Berkshire, which took so much time that before my arrival, my Captain was gone for Scotland, before I joined, and my friend, Dr Mackenzie told me, the last orders he had from Captain Macdowall was that I should urge nothing respecting a discharge until his return. The regiment being ordered for Gibraltar, he joined in May 1749, and questioning me whether I would follow the company, or choose my discharge, and I declaring for the latter, he took pains to convince me of the difficulty of my getting a pension, notwithstanding of my just pretensions, there being already such multitudes on that list, that a man of my fresh appearance, and with whole limbs had but a bad chance ; at the same time, giving me rather to understand that it would be agreeable to him to have me Sergeant in his company, which duty I might accomplish, notwithstanding my present infirmity. I then gratefully acknowledged his goodness all along, submitting for the future to whatever he thought proper, and, accordingly, went to Gibraltar, where my arm recovered amazingly, though never thoroughly. Soon after our settling in that Fortress a deficiency in paying the company coming above board, Mackenzie was broke, and I got his halbert.

I should have observed that Clark had suffered the same fate in 1748 at Ness-le-roy Camp. It may seem now in my power to return favours in kind ; but so far from that, I assure, on my honour, that I studied to make these two men happy in their reduced condition. Nor did I ever think of the injuries they had done me but with the utmost disdain of revenge. The Captain called a still more capable Sergeant to pay his company, but that man, in a fortnight, forfeited his trust, and I was called to receive the company's money, and, can it be believed, refused it, forsooth, because my benefactor, contrary to his former custom, would not give me a stated weekly allowance. He then told me that he would find a man to pay his company ; and, like an ungrateful wretch, I left my friend and his money."

Soon after this an officer of the regiment, Lieutenant Barrow, being ordered home on recruiting service, sent for Macdonald and offered to take him with him. Macdonald did not care about going, and made several excuses, which the officer admitted to be reasonable, at the same time hinting to him, that as he had lately disoblged his Captain by refusing to be Pay-Sergeant without extra allowance, he thought it advisable for him to keep out of his way for a while. Macdonald at once saw the wisdom of this, and thanking the Lieutenant for the hint, cheerfully agreed to go. He got on very well with Lieutenant Barrow, and when the latter sold his commission to a Lieutenant Hilmar, Macdonald became a favourite with him also. In April 1751, this officer returned to Gibraltar with the recruits, and left Sergeant Macdonald behind in London to continue recruiting, in which he was so successful as to enlist 26 men in three months, with whom he returned to Gibraltar. He was anxious to know with what feelings Captain Macdowall now regarded him ; but his anxiety was soon at rest. He thus describes their meeting—

"To my unspeakable comfort he declared his good pleasure at seeing me so hearty, and in the greatest good humour said, that I must pay his company, and he would give as high a weekly allowance as any Pay-Sergeant in the garrison had. I begged him for God's sake to say nothing of allowances, but command me to do what he thought proper, as I had none but repentant days and nights since I committed that ungrateful blunder. But for the future I was fully resolved to act so as to make him forget my folly. I immediately got the company's books, and proved so much to his satisfaction that he laid himself out to do better for me. In June 1753, we were relieved,

landed at Portsmouth, and marched for Perth. Here I met with my wife, in the deepest concern for her fine boy ; nor was my own less, though I affected cheerfulness on her account. In 1754, the Captain, with the Grenadiers, and a detachment from the regiment, was ordered to Braemar Castle. From thence I was always sent to Perth for officers' and men's subsistence, sometimes to the amount of £500. The officers observing to him that his trust was too much for me in my rank, his answer was, That it was all his while in my custody, and that he should be allowed to judge who to trust with his money ; nor was he apprehensive, let the sum be never so great."

(To be continued.)

SUTHERLAND FIGHTS.

II.

III. FISCARY (1196.)

ALTHOUGH historians have failed to give us any definite information regarding this fight, yet with the aid of topography and tradition we may be enabled to throw some little light upon it.

On the coast of Sutherland the Norsemen and the Celts for many years waged continuous war. In almost every instance the Sagas claim the victory for the Norsemen ; but in this particular battle we have conclusive evidence of their defeat. If battlefields have Norse names, we may infer a Norse victory, but if Celtic, we may infer a Norse defeat ; for it is evident that the victors would have the privilege of settling upon and naming the ground.

At the head of far-famed Strathnaver stands Ben-Harold. From its base rises Ault-Harold (Harold's Burn), which has given its name to and flows past Altnaharra, the cherished resort of keen Waltonians, and one of the most beautiful of the many beautiful spots in Sutherlandshire. Further down the Strath is Dalharold (Harold's Dale). Here tradition has it that a great fight was fought, and in the many grave mounds or tumuli with which the Strath, from Ben-Harold downwards, is

MAJOR JOHN MACDONALD.

SELECTIONS FROM HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

III.

THE Sergeant was now to appear in a new role—that of thief-catcher. The famous David Gauld was in the midst of his daring career in Braemar, and the authorities finding the civil power unable to cope with him, applied for military assistance ; but Macdonald must be allowed to relate his adventures himself.

“In February 1755, the Captain had a warrant from the Lord Justice-Clerk to apprehend David Gauld, *alias* Auchlonie, reputed a notorious thief and robber in the neighbourhood, sent for me, and after reading the warrant, said, Macdonald, you must take this man. I made no difficulty, if there was a trusty guide to direct, as I did not know him, nor where he lived, though I had heard of such a man as being a favourite with the Mackenzies of Dalmore. The Captain observing this to be the first thing of the kind that came his way, he would not for any consideration but the fellow should be apprehended without giving his Lordship any further trouble. Therefore he trusted to my sagacity to supply the want of a guide, being pointed out in the warrant, and my vigilance in executing it, for which service I might depend on his remembering me in due time. Next morning having got a pass, fowling-piece, powder, and shot, I set out under pretence of shooting white hares for the skins’ sake. Thus I continued, stretching from glen to glen, seven days, in the worst weather of all that year, and as wild a country as can well be conceived. I returned home, and finding the Captain rather impatient, set off again next morning ; but the weather being tempestuous took a grenadier with me, who was a good marksman, still keeping up the farce of shooting white hares. The second day after, I wrote to the Captain for a Corporal and five picked men, who joined me at nine o’clock that evening at Mr Stewart’s, a little above Abergeldie. I was now obliged to form a story of three men having deserted from Corpach, in order to engage the party to pursue them instantly, which being agreed to cheerfully, the difficulty of a guide through eight miles of dreadful mountains was removed by Mr Stewart allowing me hire his servant lad to Spittall in Glenmuick, where I alleged the deserters would be probably found that night. Accordingly we set out; the guide was seldom called to the front, as we found that post fit for men only, the snow being so deep, and the heath so high, that it took every step

to the fork ; but to make short, we invested the house of Spittall, belonging to Mr Lewis Mackenzie, took the prisoner, and arrived at Braemar Castle next evening, where I found my Captain not only well pleased, but much diverted at the farce of white hares, which I was obliged to diversify in order to obtain the intelligence necessary for finding the thief, as I durst not communicate my real design to any person lest it transpired, and he leave the country or conceal himself. On the 1st of April 1755, the grenadiers being relieved, marched for Aberdeen, and I had charge of David Gauld, till I delivered him there to the gaol."

Captain Macdowall having got leave of absence, the Company was left in charge of the Lieutenant, with whom Macdonald could not get on very well, and he became unpopular with his comrades, and, insisting on maintaining his authority, he was the means of a court-martial being held on one of his companions.

"The regiment being reviewed, my Captain got leave of absence, and ordered the paymaster to give me the Company's money as I called for it. This brought on me the displeasure of the Lieutenant who commanded it. Indeed, my patience was so much exercised by that gentleman, that I begged he would give the halbert to whom he pleased, and allow me peacefully serve as a private. This happened at Banff where the Company then quartered. My officer making no secret of his displeasure, the most licentious of the men availing themselves of the officers' countenance took unusual freedom with me. This is always the case when they find an inferior in disgrace with a superior, but I was determined to be sergeant altogether or not at all, therefore maintaining dignity with proper spirit, I was forced to bring more to punishment than could have happened had my authority been supported as it ought. Partly from the same cause proceeded the last national quarrel I had in this respectable corps, which I beg leave to mention here as the proper place, viz., being sergeant of the guard, a public-house keeper complained that one of the grenadiers came drunk to his house and was abusing him and his family very ill. I went with the man, turned out the grenadier, ordered him to his quarters, threatening to confine him if he went anywhere else, or committed any more disorder. I hardly got to the guard when the publican came again begging my protection, as the grenadier had returned and was beating his people, and breaking everything he could come at. I brought him instantly to the guard ; there he exclaimed in an audible voice what a hardship, and how ridiculous to hear tell, that a true-born Englishman should be beat, kicked, and imprisoned by the worst of Scots rebels, a Highland savage. This might have been borne if he had not made such a noise, with

repetitions of such approbrious language as brought a mob about the guard-house. I then ordered him to the black hole under the guard-room. He then extending his voice, I had no alternative but to gag him, which had the designed effect of silence. Next morning I found him sulky and determined to complain of ill-usage, but instead of giving that opportunity, I left him in the guard-house with a stout crime. This produced a court-martial, of which the majority were Englishmen. I prosecuted him, and he pleaded that I beat and kicked him to the guard-house and put him in the black hole, and there gagged and maltreated him in the most cruel manner, besides saying in an imperious tone that he would find me as capable of commanding that guard as any English sergeant in the regiment. This was his great gun, and I owned to have said so when highly provoked by his incessant clamour against me and my country, and as to ill-usage, I hoped the Court would allow my being forced to it, or shamefully abandon the command of my guard. The Court told him jocularly that I seemed to prove the assertion, and ordered him five hundred lashes, of which the commanding-officer so far approved that he ordered them to be well laid on. He could stand no more than three hundred at the first bout, and I begged off the other two hundred. This extinguished national reflection with respect to me, and confirmed my authority with the men; but possessing their money kept me still in hot water. In October the Company marched to Peterhead, and I was called by my Captain to Aberdeen to settle with him, as he had further leave of absence. When I came there I found orders for the regiment to march to the West Highland forts, and my commander at Peterhead was appointed Captain-Lieutenant. I brought this news home, and he was pleased to compliment me on my address and good management of the Company, promising future friendship, in which I found him very sincere."

Sergeant Macdonald now got a furlough, which he had well earned, and he visited his friends and relations in Sutherlandshire.

"From Fort-William I got a furlough in February 1756, and had a sincere welcome at my dear uncle's, Mr Hugh, where Mrs Sutherland and my young cousins made me extremely happy, whenever I appeared in that most hospitable house, from visiting my other friends and relations, among whom I went to see Alexander Macdonald, *alias* M'Tormaid, with whom I had left my effects when I engaged in the army. This poor man observed, justly, that he was frail in person and substance from what I had seen him, and if I brought him to account, as was alleged, he and his family would be reduced to begging. I desired him meet me

at the minister's two days after, with all papers relative to my affairs. He met accordingly, and all papers on both sides being put into Mr Sutherland's hands, I asked Macdonald if he would choose them to be burnt, as I freely forgave all claims for what passed. This was readily agreed to, and the poor man went home thankful, with comfortable news to his family. I beg leave to observe, that when on half-pay I gave this man a trifle yearly to support him; but he himself was the only person of his family worthy of such attention. They had sufficient to answer his funeral expenses, but they threw that on me because I ordered it to be decent."

The Sergeant now became ambitious, and anxious to obtain a commission. What steps he took to secure this, and with what success, we will allow himself to tell.

"Next summer, 1756, the Grenadiers marched to Inverness, and Macdowall being promoted, Captain Masline got that company. Though I did not depend on my interest with him, I was obliged to try his goodwill soon. In September I had a letter from my uncle, Mr Hugh, with one enclosed for the Earl of Sutherland. My own informed me that he had spoken to his lordship in my favour, and his lordship would be at Cradlehall next night, and desired to see me with a character from my officers in writing. My principal friend Macdowall being absent, I went directly to Captain Masline and gave him my uncle's letter. After reading it, he asked me what I would have him do. I told him that, next to Major Macdowall, he knew my behaviour the best of any officer in the regiment, therefore begged he would do what he thought proper, as he was a very good judge whether I merited a favourable recommendation or not, and begged him to be determined as I had no time to lose in waiting on his lordship, or dropping the cause altogether. He said that his opinion of me was such as made him assure me once for all that nothing in his power should be wanting to forward my interest, and therefore if I thought his application to Colonel Leighton better than my own he would wait on him immediately, which being done, and the Colonel pleading no personal acquaintance with me, the Captain got a furlough from him, with which, and the following certificate, I waited on his lordship and had a humane reception, with promise of his future patronage:—'This certificate in favour of Sergeant Macdonald, of Colonel Leighton's regiment, at his friend's desire and his own, is most cheerfully signed by his present Captain, who has been for over sixteen years an eye witness of his sobriety, courage, and honesty. He has been seventeen years in the regiment, and behaved to the satisfaction of his officers at the four battles during the last war, was twice

wounded at that of Fontenoy, and notwithstanding turned out volunteer, when the late Lord Crawford called for a platoon to cover the retreat of his troop of Life Guards. As this is due to his behaviour, it is wished it may prove beneficial to his interest. A true copy. (Signed), John Masline, Captain, 32nd Regiment.' With this I waited on his lordship, and had a promise of his future patronage. The latter end of this season I was ordered to recruit in the North with Captain (now Colonel) Ross. Here I had not only the good fortune to please the Captain but became such a favourite with his father, David Ross of Inverchasly, that he interceded with the Hon. Captain Mackay of Skibo, then a member of Parliament, to get me a commission. Mr Mackay said that being so long in the army, from whence my pretensions sprung, my own officers should recommend me, and if that was warm, there remained little difficulty in getting me a commission."

But Macdonald did not succeed in getting a commission until three years afterwards, and then only got an Ensigncy in a regiment of volunteers raised by the Earl of Sutherland. He, however, never lost heart, and promotion came, slow but sure, at last.

"Inverchasly took it for granted that if I got a sufficient character from my own officers, he and another gentleman in the neighbourhood would prevail with the member to get me advanced. Had they been equally keen, that might have happened. Next year Colonel Webb sent me word to recruit at my own hand, that is, without a superior. I waited on Inverchasly, and he, in great earnest, insisting on my getting the recommendation mentioned by Mr Mackay, I wrote to Major Macdowall that a friend had interceded with Mr Mackay to recommend me for a commission, that Mr Mackay said a character from my officers was requisite, therefore begged he would be pleased to give me such as he thought proper, which would determine me to drop such ideas altogether or pursue it with all the interest I could make. In course of post I received three letters from the Major. One for myself, concerning that for Mr Mackay, which was closed, as being an acquaintance. This might look like a favourable circumstance, although it produced nothing. The other letter was open, and I was to close and direct it, and it was composed in the following words :—

"INVERNESS, 19th October 1757.—SIR,—I have a letter from Sergeant Macdonald, who writes me that you have applied to Mr Mackay to recommend him for a commission. I had an opportunity to know him all the last war; he always behaved well. As he was long my Sergeant when I had the Grenadiers, made me

know him better than the rest of the officers. I wrote Mr Mackay in his favour, and hope he will recommend him, as in my opinion he is a very good man, knows his duty well, and a very proper man to be advanced; and what is done for him will greatly oblige, Sir, yours, &c. (Signed), William Macdowall."

"Without closing or directing it, I went to Inverchasly. He approved much of my confidence in him, and desired me close and direct it for the other gentleman, whose good offices I depended much on. This is done, and I gave him likewise Mr Mackay's, but never had a direct answer.

"In 1758, Macdowall purchased the Lieutenant-Colonelcy, and Seton the Majority. They were my friends, and with Captain Masline did all in their power to get me advanced, but nothing took place till 1759, when the Earl of Sutherland got the raising of a battalion to serve in Britain during the war. The commissions had no exceptions in them, but by a previous agreement the officers had no title to half-pay or any other reward for their services. His Lordship promised me a lieutenancy in this corps, but at filling up the commissions the Duke of Argyle would allow me no more than an ensigncy, which my friends of the 32nd advised me to accept, as his Lordship gave reason to believe that he meant to get me into an established corps when his own was reduced. In consequence of this ensigncy, I appeared at Dornoch in kilt on the 30th November 1759, after being twenty years and three months in breeches, long cloak, and spatterdashes, etc., and no man in that corps used the native dress more than I did, notwithstanding my being early and late teaching the men, while drilling was necessary, but the trouble was uncommonly short, the men as well as officers striving who should exercise or perform any part of duty best, by which they soon became, not only an honour to their teacher, but to discipline itself. And I was exceedingly happy with them, and so far in his Lordship's favour, that he made strong application with the Secretary of War for my removal to an established corps. In May 1762 he joined at Aberdeen, and acquainted me that Mr Townshend, the Secretary, had assured him of a lieutenancy for me in a few weeks. The regiment marched to Edinburgh and made an excellent review.

"In August his Lordship went North. All parties seemed now tired of the war, and I longing for a bit of sure bread wrote to his Lordship for leave to go to London, which I got in course, with a letter to the Secretary, and went with the Hon. Captain Perigrine Barly, in the Dispatch Sloop of War, to Sheerness, from thence to Gravesend, and dressing myself in my Highland regimentals waited on Colonel Barré at Chatham. The Colonel did not choose to intercede for me, and seemed certain of my

being disappointed. However, as he was well acquainted with the ceremonies of that department his hints were of great use to me, in course of the eleven weeks that I attended the Secretary at the office as constant as his shadow, and I managed matters so with his attendants that I never missed audience at his levée. In short he was so tired of me that he began to think seriously of giving me something in order to be rid of my trouble. I always appeared in my full Highland dress—that is a bonnet with a large bunch of feathers, great kilt, broadsword, pistol, dirk, large badger skin purse, and a pair of locks as big as besoms, with an amazing strut, to set the whole off in the most marvellous manner, and though this was in a great measure forced work, I found my account in it; but 'tis too tedious to explain how.

“The guns fired in the Park at one o'clock in the morning for the preliminaries of peace being signed, this could not add to my diligence, but it augmented my concern. I attended at the War Office as usual, and the Secretary's patience being worn out, ordered his first clerk to set me down Ensign to Major Johnson's corps, or the 101st. I paraded his promise to the Earl of Sutherland of a lieutenancy; he in seeming friendship desired me take this in the meantime, and when a lieutenancy appeared vacant I should have it, perhaps to-morrow or next day. I answered that there were two vacant in that same corps; he observed that I was very intelligent, but that these two were promised. I found him now so far disposed to be rid of me that I had no doubt of getting the ensigncy, therefore with a little unusual freedom told him that the army looking on the Secretary of War as their common father, expected that he looking on them as his family would reward merit and long services liberally; instead of this old servants were glad to get anything, when every youth who had never served an hour, but had a friend in favour with the man in office, could get what commission they pleased, that I did not doubt but these lieutenancies would be disposed of in this manner, and therefore hoped he would pardon my disclosing my indignation at being put off with the lowest pittance given to any officer under his Majesty after twenty-four years constant service, a broken constitution, and a body hacked with wounds. He then, as if surprised, asked if I had been in any other than the present Sutherland regiment. I answered that I was upwards of twenty years in the 32nd in the whole of the last war, and in all the battles, and often wounded, which I could prove by general officers then in town. He then expressed his concern that he had not known this sooner. I observed that the Earl could not miss informing him of my services, as it was his Lordship's only argument for demanding such a commission for me. He then, with great grace said that he had no notion of

putting an old servant off with a trifle, and calling to the clerk ordered him to set me down Lieutenant to the 101st. This produced my best bows, scrapes, and acknowledgments of his goodness. Still, if I had not been attentive I have occasion to believe that I had got nothing. At least, this is certain, that the second day after stalking about the War Office, and going into a particular room, the same clerk who set me down as a lieutenant asked what I expected, and when I answered a lieutenancy, he said, "In Crawford's?" I replied, no, sir; Mr Townshend ordered you to set me down to Johnson's. This ignorance, whether pretended or not, made me uneasy, and still troublesome, till I found my name notified. Then your humble servant was an officer; and here I beg leave to confute, what was firmly alleged by a gentleman, and afterwards repeated and believed by many, that I had drawn my dirk on the Secretary in the levée room, and pent him up in a corner till I forced him to promise me a lieutenancy. Was I capable of such a desperate action, it would appear unnecessary at this time, having a memorial prepared, and one of the Lords-in-Waiting engaged to deliver it to his Majesty, in case my success at the War Office did not answer my expectations. Meantime, my commission being expected, I joined the 101st at Perth in January 1763, and on the 30th of March following was reduced with that corps. I went home to my native country, but was too late to get a farm that year. My uncle, Mr Hugh, and Mrs Sutherland insisted on my living with them at least until their sons came home—both being in the Queen's Highland Regiment in Ireland, which being likewise reduced, they soon arrived, and I was not allowed to think of quitting the family till I got a place of my own. There I lived with my family fifteen months, I may well say the happiest of my life, being esteemed as the eldest son or brother, and my wife as the only daughter or sister, by one of the most decent and sensible women existing, and three near relations of consummate sense and liberal education.

(To be continued.)

THE ORIGIN OF CERTAIN CLAN NAMES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CELTIC MAGAZINE.

SIR,—In Gough's "Camden" (London, 1806) it is stated that in the parish of Duthil, in Strathspey, "there is a small grove of trees held in such veneration that nobody will cut a branch out of it."

This wood was undoubtedly sacred to Grian, from whom not only the Grampians derived their name, anciently Granzebene (Grian's hills), but also the Clan Grant, although there are still some who consider the latter a Norman name.

MAJOR JOHN MACDONALD.
SELECTIONS FROM HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

IN 1764 our hero took a seventeen years' lease of some land in Moy, and settled down, as he thought, to end his days in the peaceful occupation of a farmer. The Earl of Sutherland still continued his patronage towards him, and the county gentlemen treated him with great courtesy and respect. He thus describes his position, in a few words—

“While my noble friend lived, I was not only too happy in his favour, but found myself as easy with every gentleman of the county as if I had been their college companion, and when to my great grief I lost him, I did not feel their esteem abate in the least; but rather increase. This will appear evident from their calling me to their general meetings on different occasions, and particularly my being called to the Council of our Royal Burgh every second year, and I was included in the Commission of the Peace, and acted accordingly.”

Macdonald was, however, destined to go through further adventures. The American War broke out, and in 1775 an intimation appeared from the War Office, to the effect that officers who had been reduced with their corps when peace was concluded, and who were willing to serve again in the same rank they formerly held, should send in their names at once to the Secretary of War. Macdonald pricked his ears at this notice, like an old war horse that smelled the battle from afar. He had also another reason for wishing to again take up a military life, besides his mere fondness for the profession. His son was now a strong promising lad of fifteen, who inherited his father's martial spirit; and Macdonald wished to get him into the service, although he was not able to purchase a commission for him. He says—

“I looked upon this as a decent call that merited an answer from every one in these circumstances, and without hesitation wrote that though I was then in my 56th year of age, and 36th year of service, still as stout and hearty as could be expected at such a time of life, I was as willing as ever to serve my King and country, though I could not expect to be better settled after a few years service than I was at present. From all this, I little expected to be called; but, behold! I am appointed to the 42nd or Royal Highland Regiment.”

Taking his son along with him, he went to Fort-George, where a detachment of the 42nd was then stationed, under the command of Major Murray. By this officer he was sent with some recruits to join the regiment at Glasgow. Lord John Murray, who was in command, enrolled young Macdonald as a volunteer in the same company as his father. Their reception is thus described—

“I became rather a favourite with his lordship ; but I had better be so with Colonel Stirling, who was to go with and command the corps; but I soon became well with Major Murray, who applied to have me in his company to take care and charge of the men and their money. My noble friend the Earl of Eglinton, being then in town, received me with his usual humanity, and spoke to Colonel Stirling in my favour ; but the Colonel seemed cool, perhaps naturally judging that an old man and a boy were rather likely to be a burden than a credit to that distinguished corps. And though he did the highest justice to every individual in the regiment, I could not reckon myself a favourite with him until the reduction of Fort Washington. By that time he found the boy act the man on every occasion, and that the old man acted his part as well as any subaltern in the regiment.”

The 42nd embarked at Greenock on the 12th of April 1776, and landed on Staten Island on the 4th of July, thus taking nearly three months on a voyage which is now accomplished in less than 10 days. The exploits of the gallant 42nd have been so frequently and fully told that it is unnecessary here to dwell on Macdonald's individual share of the campaign. His son, although but a boy, bore himself bravely during his first engagement, as shown by the following reference :—

“The enemy finding us thus give way, came on furiously, and I had hot work. This was the first opportunity I had of seeing my son fairly engaged, and I will be allowed to say that it gave me pleasure to see him active and cool ; but with only one company there was no keeping of that ground, therefore we retreated in good order. In this engagement I had a ball through the cuff of my coat, which made a trifling contusion. We had two Captains wounded slightly, and Ensign Mackenzie mortally. In consequence of his vacancy I was advised to memorial the Commander-in-Chief, in order to push for my son.”

Macdonald did not succeed at this time in getting a commission for his boy, although he took a great deal of trouble in waiting on different officers ; but they all considered the lad too young to recommend. General Pigot received the father kindly

and told him not to be in too great a hurry to push his son, but by exerting himself to do his duty, and encouraging his son to do the same, gain the favour of their Colonel, and no doubt he would provide for them. Macdonald followed this good advice, and soon had the pleasure of hearing Colonel Stirling speak well of the lad. It was during the attack on Fort Washington that the following occurred:—

“Whether my son landed before or after me, it is certain that we lost each other in scrambling up the rocks, and knew nothing of each other's fate till the evening, when it will be allowed, when hot firing ceased, natural concern took place. After mounting the hill, and firing ceased, to capitulate, our party sat down under trees to rest. I soon observed to Colonel Macpherson [Cluny] that we had better look for our Regiment. He answered, as there seemed nothing to be done, we were as well there for the present. I replied, My dear Duncan, you have no son on this Island this day. Very just, says he, let us move, and we soon found the corps, when Colonel Stirling shook hands with me, and thanked me for my activity in dispersing the rebels at Morris' House, adding, Your son has been with me through all this day's danger to yourself, and trust him to me in the future.”

His age did not prevent the gallant old soldier from taking his share in the hard work of the campaign, as shown by the following extract. At this time the 42nd was at Princetown—

“Here it happened my turn to go with the baggage of the army to Brunswick. The weather was very bad, with snow, frost, and sleet alternately. The road was still worse in returning with ammunition and prisoners, and the baggage horses being very ill-shod, and as ill-fed, it was the fourth day before we got back to Princetown, though constantly on duty. Here, finding the 42nd with the bulk of the army had marched towards Trenton, I followed, and late at night found them near that place, and I had a little rest on a wisp of rotten hay. Next morning the army followed the rebels to Princetown; but proved too late to save the 17th from a severe handling from a large body of them on their way to the Blue Mountains. But Lord Cornwallis, dreading the danger of Brunswick; where so much valuable stores lay, marched with all expedition to save that place, from whence the 42nd was detached to Piscataqua, and arrived there on the evening of the 3rd January 1777; and I have given the reader all this trouble to tell him that then I finished my eighty-two miles march with only one bad night's rest.”

On another occasion he became separated from the regiment for a while, when the Colonel sent a party to look for him—

"On the 10th of May the rebels made a formidable attack on our picquet in front, and took the officer and sergeant prisoners, after killing or wounding most of the men. When I came up with Major Murray's company I released them, and took a wounded officer with thirteen rebels prisoners. Our people were so enraged at their continual harassing that post, and in particular at this last attempt, that I, finding them in humour to bayonet the prisoners, took some time to put them in discreet hands, with positive orders not to hurt them. By this little delay I missed the regiment, which halted at a proper distance. I followed a firing, which I found to be a few mad fellows of ours, and a company of Light Infantry, that had joined them and followed the chase too far, and to no good purpose. When I came up with them, I used all arguments that would occur to me to make them return to the regiment, but all in vain, until they approached an encampment of the enemy where only a tent was standing, and saw them forming behind their encampment. I then told them in a very serious manner that cannon would soon appear, and hoped they would give up such folly as must endanger their liberty, if not their lives; thus I at last got the better of their impetuosity, and retired a little. At that instant my son joined me, with a sergeant and fifteen men. It seems Colonel Stirling, missing me, asked the lad where I was, the latter answering that he left me giving charge of prisoners to Corporal Paul Macpherson, and that he believed that I was forward. The Colonel ordered him to take a party and find me, and directed I should declare his displeasure to these men for venturing so far from the regiment, and, at their peril, to return immediately. In this place, gratitude leads me to say that Major Murray's company of the 42nd was the most alert, most decent, and best principled soldiers I ever had the honour to command or be connected with."

Our veteran was now stricken down with fever, and unable to follow the regiment.—

"When the army, after going by Chesapeak Bay, landed at the head of the Elk, I was in a high fever, and left on board an Hospital Ship, and relapsed often, which brought me very low. Still on coming up the Delaware I landed with the first convalescents at Wilmington. Here I found my friends of the 71st, and Major Macdonald of that corps being ordered from the convalescents into a Battalion, choose to have me Adjutant to that corps. I then commenced in that duty."

Some little time after, on reaching Philadelphia, officers and men were ordered to join their respective corps, and Macdonald had the pleasure of meeting his son, and hearing how he got on during his absence.—

"Now, my son gave me a long detail of the kindness and attention of all the officers to him in my absence, in particular that, when Colonel Stirling found I had been left behind, he called him out of the rank of privates where he always stood, telling him he was sorry he had been so long in that rank, and he would take care he should appear no more in it, ordering him at that same time to command half the company on a march or action, that is, to act as subaltern in the company till his father joined, or his being otherwise appointed. This was very flattering to a lad of seventeen, and two years service; but this was not all. After the battle of Brandy Wine, the Colonel gave him a copy of a memorial addressed to General Stowe, setting forth his own short, and my long, services, desiring him to transcribe and sign a fair copy of it, which the Colonel presented in order to procure a commission in some other regiment, as there was no vacancy in the 42nd. This was done, and a favourable answer received. Soon after, Major Murray being appointed Lieut.-Colonel to the 27th, and the General being pleased to give the commissions in succession in the 42nd, my son got the Ensigncy, date 5th October 1777. Thus one of my grand points being obtained, there remained only to realise a penny for my Lieutenancy, and retire after serving upwards of thirty-eight years, and at the age of fifty-eight."

While the Lieutenant was deliberating how he could retire with a good grace in time of war, and at the same time get the money for his commission, which was a great object to him, fortune favoured him with one of those rare opportunities which sometimes occur. It was found necessary to raise Provincial troops to assist the regular army, and just at this time the order came to raise a battalion in Maryland. There was no lack of volunteers, but there was a difficulty in getting officers, for the men of position and influence in the district who had been appointed, were as a rule quite ignorant of military duty. Lieutenant Macdonald had got acquainted with several gentlemen of position, and one of these, a Mr Chalmers, got the commission of Lieutenant-Colonel of the newly raised battalion. Not being a military man himself, he was anxious to procure those who were, for his officers, and offered our friend a Commission as his Major, if he could arrange to leave his present post. Here was the very opportunity Macdonald wished for. He immediately laid his case before Colonel Stirling, who cheerfully promised to do all in his power to assist him. How he succeeded we will leave himself to tell.—

"He (Colonel Stirling) wrote strongly in my favour, recommending me to the General as well qualified for the intended office, and meriting the indulgence of settling my present office. But instead of giving me the trouble of delivering this letter, he put it in his pocket, went to Head-Quarters, sent it in to the General, and soon followed in person, and, without doubt, confirmed what might be alleged in his letter. The General graciously owning himself no stranger to my character, matters were then and there settled, and next day, the 10th of November, Ensign John Spence was appointed Lieutenant in the 42nd Regiment, vice Lieutenant John Macdonald, who retired. That same day orders contained the following:—Lieutenant John Macdonald appointed Major to the First Battalion of the Maryland Loyalists. Mr Spence gave me bills immediately for the Lieutenancy. And General Howe having complimented the Colonel on getting such a man to be his Major, I joined immediately, and the corps was soon recruited to 335 privates and 42 non-commissioned officers, the establishment being only 448 of both, and I had very flattering compliments from Generals Grey and Paterson, and several other officers of experience, for their appearance and alertness in going through their exercises and different manœuvres. By the latter end of April, I was vain of the figure they made."

A few months, however, changed the aspect of affairs. The British troops lost ground, and as a consequence their prestige; Republicanism gained strength, until even the Provincial troops became infected with it, and deserted daily in large parties, to join their countrymen in their struggle for liberty. This state of affairs necessitated the amalgamation of three Provincial regiments into one, viz., the Maryland Loyalist, the Pennsylvania, and the Waldeck Regiments. This combined corps was ordered to Jamaica. On the voyage, it came to the ears of the Major that in case of an American vessel coming in sight, that the men were determined to mutiny and join the Americans. This caused him great anxiety. We will give his own version.—

"This made me lay at night with a loaded blunderbuss under my head, all the rest of the voyage. After being a month at Jamaica, on the 16th January 1779, we arrived in the Bay of Pensacola; but the men having the smallpox among them, were ordered to the Red Cliffs, ten miles distance from the town. Here it might be naturally supposed that all apprehensions of mutiny or desertion was at an end, as there were no enemy in arms within five hundred miles of us; but, behold! on the 14th

of March, a sergeant with sixteen men deserted in a body, with their arms, and more ammunition than their ordinary complement. At this time Colonel Chalmers got leave of absence for New York, and I being informed that a more formidable desertion was designed, took all the ammunition from the men, lodged it in a store, and ordered the Quarter-master to lay there with it, and I visited it myself at all hours of the night. Indeed, self-preservation kept me on the watch, as if once they got masters of that store to pursue their design, I could not expect that they would be very ceremonious with me."

Thus, by his prompt action, the Major prevented any further attempts at mutiny. He, however, did not feel himself at all comfortable in his new position. The men were discontented, and the officers were incapable, and spent their time in quarrelling among themselves, so that to support his authority he had to be pretty severe with them. A Court-Martial was held, and three officers, a captain, a lieutenant, and an ensign, were dismissed the service. With all this, he seems to have had the entire confidence of his superior officers, as is shown by the following extract :—

"Meantime a Spanish invasion being apprehended, the General joined the Pennsylvania and Maryland Battalions into one corps, under the command of Colonel Allan. That Colonel getting leave of absence a few weeks before the siege, the command of the battalion fell to me, and in a great measure that of the British troops too, as there was no other Field Officer of either line in the place. The only other Field Officer was the Lieutenant-Colonel of the Waldecks, but except as Field Officer of the day, he did not interfere with British or Provincial troops, and for good reasons the General never employed him or his troops out of the works."

This additional responsibility made him so anxious that for weeks he never retired to rest at night, for fear of a surprise. This naturally told on a man of his age ; but could not subdue his spirit, or his determination to do his duty. He thus describes his situation at this time.—

"Thus being extremely fatigued, besides other disorders, raised a swelling on the side of my head, which was blistered in the evening of the 3rd of May. That night I had the rounds, and my head running. Next morning in course of duty I was obliged to attend General Campbell with my report. He expressed great concern at seeing me in that condition, as he

meant a sally at twelve o'clock that day, the fourth (the sixth in the newspapers is a mistake), and he did not know who else to appoint to that command. I told him to be under no apprehension but I would do my duty while I had whole bones, nor would I yield a command of that nature to any man alive, and begged he would give myself the necessary instructions, and not puzzle me afterwards with messages by aide-de-camps, which I had found on other occasions contradictory and ambiguous."

The Major succeeded so well in this attempt, that his name was mentioned with honour in the General's report.

Soon after, Articles of Capitulation were agreed upon, on very favourable terms, and the Major became, with the rest of his comrades, a prisoner of war, and was sent to New York. He now determined to leave the army and return home.—

"At this time, I had the confirmation of bad news from home. My trustee having become insolvent, my affairs mismanaged, my wife and daughter distressed, while my effects were a wreck in the hands of those who never dreamed I should appear to bring them to any account. The conclusions are obvious. At this time I considered that having passed my grand climacteric, there was no depending on a constitution, always at severe trial from my twelfth year. My last service was finished decently. In any future service I might fail of ability. I hope the judicious reader will, from what has been said, see good reason for my sacrificing my commission, to escape with the little life left to my family and friends. This was effected by landing at Portsmouth, 20th January 1782—a few days in London—then to Edinburgh by land. Engaged *Drumuachter* in the memorable storm in March of that year; arrived at Moy, 6th April, in tolerable health, though I was obliged to march on foot all the way from Dunkeld.

"Thus at the end of forty-three years I quitted a service to which Providence, contrary to my own inclination, directed me, after such a variety of hardships as few constitutions could bear. In balancing the general usage I met with in the army, I find it most favourable, as I had not many friends, nor remarkable talents that could recommend me to much notice. Perseverance, honesty, and sobriety I take credit for; but who can say that merit is neglected, or finds no reward in the army, when such slender parts as mine could make a Major.

"I now rest well pleased with my success in the world, and in general with my own conduct, even where my designs failed most. Remembering that they were always fair and prudent at the time; but that no human sagacity can guard against future events."

And thus we leave the gallant old warrior enjoying the repose he had so hardly earned, but we confess we should have liked to have learned something of the after career of his son, who, no doubt, if his life was spared, rose in his profession.

At the end of the manuscript, from which the foregoing selections have been taken, is the following pedigree of the writer :—

“ John, son of	}	All born in Sutherland.
Angus, son of		
William, son of		
Norman, son of		
Murdoch, son of		
Donald, son of		
John (who came to Sutherland from Dingwall), son of		
Clerk or Clerach.		

“ Clerach or Clerk, Manach or Monk of the Monastery of Beauuly.

“ This monk (as it is handed down) of Beauuly was a Macdonald, and his son being Clerk to the town of Dingwall was commonly called Clerach, from his office, by which his son John was sometimes called Mac-a-Chlerich and Mac-a-Mhannich, at which he seemed always offended, not chosing to be run out of his proper surname ; but, as is commonly the case, the more he resented it, the more the joke prevailed, and ended in his killing a youth who had perhaps followed it too far. But probably having greater interest with the then Macdonald, Earl of Ross, John thought it prudent to make his escape, and settled in Braegrudy, in the parish of Rogart. Thus I am positive that in a lineal descent no more than the above five were born there before myself. And our burying-place being in the outskirts of the church-yard show our being late comers ; whereas Murrays, Mackays, Sutherlands, and Douglasses are central, and near the church wall. And in my early days our people went by the appellation of Sliochd a Mhannich, commonly, which offended them very much, they knowing nothing of a Monk but judging that it meant only a capon. The repetition backwards is—

“ Ian Mac Inish vic Uilliam vic Hormaid vic Mhurchie vic Dhoill vic Ian vic a Chlerich vic a Mhannich.”

Any information respecting the descendants of Major Macdonald, would, no doubt, prove interesting to the reader, and we shall be glad to receive such.

M. A. ROSE.