

2nd March, 1859.

Dear de Bellefeuille,

My Father was from the Braes of Lochaber, as I was often told, of gentle blood - being a descendant of the Lord of the Isles - more immediately of the families of Keppoch and Achnacoichean (?) - and I recollect stories of old women that one of the Keppochs unhorsed one of the King's troopers at Culloden, mounted his horse. The horse hearing the Bugle in the English camp took his rider into the English camp, where he was made prisoner and afterwards quartered at Carlisle, when it was found he had two hearts - be this as it might, he was said to be a fine fellow who deserved a better fate. At Culloden most of my forefathers fell, and amongst others my Grandfather, who received a cut in the head from an English trooper. He fell but recovered, but during the rest of his life had occasionally the loss of his reason [and] in one of those paroxysms he sold the family property for a song.

My Father was an officer in the old eighty fourth (84th) of the rank of Captain when that regiment was disbanded. I remember him to be generally on the recruiting service, being a Highlander, and that he was called a smart fellow. I remember his Piper nearly killing a white faced cow when drunk one night, beating her and swearing it was the Devil - his sword was hacked in pieces on the poor cow's horns. There was a story told of my Father that when paying his addresses to my Mother on one of his visits, going up the lawn in front of the House, he was attacked by a gander. His only defence was to draw his sword and keep him off. My Mother and other Ladies saw the Battle from the window and the door was opened for him and admittance given to where the Ladies were. The salutation was -

Well done, Capt McDonald. You fought well - is this the first blood your sword has drawn. It may be supposed that this attack was worse than that of the gander. He died of Fleurisy at the age of about 40. He had married a second time and lived at Garth near Callander being on half pay.

My Mother died when I was an infant. I think I remember her on her death bed, being in my nurse's arms putting me to bed. She was a Small, niece to General John Small, whose likeness is in your possession. He had a Brother a Doctor Small, who must have been her Father. She had two sisters - one married to Spalding. He was the inventor of the diving bell. He was suffocated on going to the Royal George sunk at Portsmouth by the neglect of not giving him the necessary air and obeying the signals.

The other sister married Campbell of Father to Sir Archd Campbell (of Burmese memory) and Grand Father to Sir John Campbell who fell in the attack on the Redan, consequently you & Sir John Campbell were Cousins, Sir Archd being your Uncle but also marrying my sister Helen - by my Father's second marriage. A daughter of Sir Archd married the Hon^{ble} Major Spencer, who with a large family are all alive. Another Daughter married a Capⁿ Snodgrass. She is alive with one son, who was wounded by the side of his Uncle at the Redan. He is now liaison officer with his Reg^t the 38th I believe.

Gen^l Small was Colonel of the Glengarry Fencibles and died Governor of Guernsey & Jersey. Harold McDonald's Father whom you knew as our now in N.Y. was an officer in the Fencibles was at Guernsey at the time when Gen^l Small died. There was a story told of the General that he went to old Queen Charlotte ... in his Highland dress. The old Lady called him & told him when he came again to change his dress, that some of the Maids of Honour did not like such an exposé as his bare knees - of course

he took the hint. Your Brother Holland has a Dirk and Dress Purse belonging and once worn by Gen^l Small. In 1804 I visited Salem some 12 miles east of Boston, there was a painting of the attack up on Bunker's Hill, a mounted officer appeared leading the attack at the head of his Reg^t, the 8th. I was told it was Gen^l Small then Colonel of that Reg^t. A Mr. McLeod who traveled with me turned round & said that was my Uncle. Some Americans were present & the consequence was an invitation to a dinner.

You had an Uncle in London, Angus McDonald, Army Agent, Pall Mall Court, Pall Mall. He died in the South of France. His widow, a fine woman, died lately in Brighton, and if you look into the Army lists of those days, you may see his name as Agent to several Regiments.

You had connections in the Canadas. The late Honble Colonel McGillivray married your Aunt Magdalene. There is a likeness of them as a family group as it were. The Honble Chief Justice Reid was married to Col. McGillivray's sister. The late Aldjoes of Noel House, Kensington, London were your cousins - of that family none are living but the Brackenburys. Brackenbury is Consul at Madrid. In the Highlands you might find many relatives entirely unknown to me, being too young when I left home to have known them all.

Your affectionate

Father

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Your affectionate

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and it amused him very much.....
He wore his sword daily when dressed for
dinner. He appeared to me to be awkward.
I told him his sword was more dangerous to
himself than it would ever be to an enemy,
hence began our quarrel.

Pg 13 / in a calash..... / I was placed in a Boarding House Mrs..... excellent Quarters - during my stay in that Town. / from many others during my stay..... / ← 2 pages.

Pg 14 I must now proceed to the Indian Territory called the North West but at this day the Hudson's Bay territory, as Clerk to the North West Co.

My narrative will be more egotistical than historical as a matter of course. It is this you require of me. That country is well known now to what it was in those days.

I will then note some incidents in my life which may come to my recollection, and as I have said entirely egotism.

My dear De Belf^e

Your affectionate

Father

/to their titular saint.... / & then proceeded on the Lake two Mountains - which was the first Lake of any magnitude I had ever seen. We came to the River Ottawa in due time ascending that River a long way. We left it & made our way to Lake Nepisingue - crossing that Lake as the..... from which rivers flow to the westward. We reached French River. Here we were storm stayed a day or two.

great care of me.

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We proceeded and came to the Fort of Lake La Pluis - west end of that Lake - or rather on River of Lake La Pluis - we proceeded down the current of that beautiful stream to Lac du Bois (Lake of the Woods). We crossed this Lake amongst many beautiful Islands to the N.W. end of it - from this Lake issues the River Winipeg - a dangerous & very large stream - to Lake Winipeg - a lake about 250 miles long, & wide in proportion, we had many strong gales on this lake and were often weather bound having many long traverses to make before we got to the North End which we did in safety in about 6 days which was considered a good passage for loaded canoes.

Py 19
We then got into what we call the waters of the Saskatchewan & its tributaries - but having to get up 3 miles of strong rapids making a long Portage & a strong current to Lake traverse, & crossing Lake traverse we got into Lake Bourbon or sometimes called Cedars Lake - a fine large Lake - to Lake traverse - on Mud Lake, so called from its being muddy from the sediments of the noble Saskatchewan - crossing Mud Lake we fairly got into the Saskatchewan called in this part of it River du Pas. After a hard pull for 2 or 3 days we got by a small channel into Cumberland Lake & left the Saskatchewan south of us. Here was a Settlement or Trading post. I ought to have mentioned that on Lake traverse a solitary wild goose came towards the Brigade skimming the lake. Upwards of 20 guns were ready when within distance. I fortunately took a long shot & took her down of which I was very proud - several of

-13 cont'd-

Pg 20
bottom

the next settlement - where we encamped at River Maligne & an Indian brought us some of the meat of a fine Moose Deer freshly shot. We had a supper of it - I think I never found any thing so good probably from the long absence of fresh food.

Pg 21
middle

It abounds in wild game, such as wild Ducks & Geese - some Pelicans - this gave us plenty of fresh food - our Hunter killed also some Deer.

23
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the lake was clear.

26

When we again set out on our journey by the south we came by viz. by English (?) on Churchill River at our rendezvous at Lac Superieur i.e. the Grand Portage. Mr. Shaw left me in charge of the Brigade with the faithfull Guide Antyme - to pursue our way as weather might allow us, while he & a couple more of the Partners who had joined left us in light canoes to prepare

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When we again set out on our journey by the south we came by vis. by English (?) on Churchill River at our rendezvous at Lac Supérieur i.e. the Grand Portage. Mr. Shaw left me in charge of the Brigade with the faithful Guide Antyme - to pursue our way as weather might allow us, while he & a couple more of the Partners who had joined left us in light canoes to prepare

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