

CLAN MACRAE SOCIETY OF CANADA
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THE MACRAES OF STRATHGLASS

by Peter A. MacRae

Part I: INTRODUCTION

Before setting out this brief history, it is important to set certain matters straight. First, consider the name and spelling of 'MacRae': the spelling used here, it is conceded, is the modern evolved version, which is ordinarily met with in most accounts since the turn of the century. It is the same family whether spelled 'McRae' or 'Macrae' which are the commonest Highland variants. It's simply a matter of style or custom. (The writer's own family has frequent occurrences of all three spellings) Outside the Highlands, the spellings '(Mc)MacCrae,' '(Mc)MacCrea' are often encountered. Sometimes the 'Mac/Mc' is dropped altogether especially where a migrant settled in an area hostile to Scottish culture, and the names (C)Rae, (C)Rea, Crow, Craw originated.

In olden times the name was 'Mc' or 'MacRath' and in old Strathglass records it is found variously as 'McRa, McCra(e), McKray' amongst others since there was no standardised spelling into English from its Gaelic root. The Gaelic MacRath (pronounced 'MacCra') is not a patronymic. It is thought to have an ecclesiastical origin and is recorded in Ireland as far back as 448 AD. The patronymic of the main recorded branch of the MacRaes is 'MacGillechriosd' or 'McGilchrist'. Translated this means 'son of the servant of Christ' or 'son of Christopher' which is broadly analogous to 'McRath' which means 'son of grace'. The patronymic occurs generally as a Christian name in the MacRaes although in Strathglass it was used as a surname both with and without the clan name.

The MacRaes of Kintail have often been regarded as a sept of the Clan Mackenzie. Indeed they are reputed to share a common ancestry and have been closely connected since the thirteenth century. However, the MacRaes have been present in the Highlands as a clan name for probably far longer than the Mackenzies who came to prominence in the fourteenth century after the fall from grace of the Earls of Ross. However, although certain prominent branches of the MacRaes have both served and benefited from the Mackenzie connection it is not the whole story. Again it is supposed Macraes came first to Kintail via the Mackenzies, but this is not necessarily true either. MacRaes are recorded as having gone to Glenelg to collect rents for the Bissetts, long before the assumed migration at the behest of the Mackenzies. The MacRaes association with the Chisholms is less well documented but it is clear that from times in the distant past the Chisholm lands of Strathglass, including Glen Affric and Glen Cannich have provided ready refuge for MacRaes.

As Strathglass and its neighbouring glens were important through routes in olden days, many passed back and fore along the drove roads and upon the high passes leading to Kintail and the West and to Glen Moriston and the South. This is a situation, which was tolerated by the Chisholms but often led to conflict when through travellers may have caused damage or loss to livestock and possessions of their hosts. MacRaes came to settle in Strathglass for three main reasons:

Certain individuals were dissatisfied with conditions in Kintail and relationships with kinsmen and the Mackenzies. Secondly, geographical proximity; expansion of grazings for cattle owned by prosperous Kintail Macraes flowed naturally into the Western reaches of Glen Cannich and Glen Affric and these were formalised by leases from the Chisholm. Thirdly, personal relationships and intermarriage with the Chisholm families developed out of contacts fostered for the aforementioned reasons. A further common bond was the relationship of both clans to their powerful Mackenzie neighbours. Many of the well known MacRae families share a Royal ancestry with the Chisholms descending as they do from Elizabeth Stewart wife of Kenneth Mackenzie 10th Baron of Kintail. By this common ancestry Alexander Chisholm XIX was third cousin of Duncan Macrae of Inverinate (Donnachaidh nam Pios).

It is also necessary to understand the important legal difference between the words 'of', 'in' and 'at' when associating Scottish surnames and place names. These are significant in relation to land tenure or residency. 'Of', meant the person named owned a heritable interest in the land. 'In' signified a tenant and 'At' signified temporary residence in a place. In this way, Chisholm of Comer and McRa in Comer at the same date can be understood. When talking of the Chisholms or for that matter the Frasers and even the MacRaes as clans or extended families, they can all be described loosely as 'of Strathglass'. This is because Strathglass is a geographical area and not a feu or land in single ownership. Normally, clans described as being 'of' a larger area

would have individual families of the name in greatest concentration there. Even so, 'of Strathglass' is a narrow description for the Chisholm lands which extended into Glen Cannich and Glen Affric even parts of Kintail, such was the widespread influence of this numerically small clan.

There is evidence to suggest that the MacRaes may have been in the Strathglass vicinity somewhat longer than the Chisholms. This is owing to the former having been vassals of the powerful Bisset family, of Norman origin, in Clunes in the Aird. Essentially, the MacRaes were of tribal origin. That is to say they originate from the Cruithne, one of the original Pictish tribes who occupied the Highlands before the civilising influences of the Normans appeared on the scene. Like the native Americans they had no concept of land ownership or transfer.

It is clear that the incoming Normans reached an accommodation with the native tribes and families. In the case of the MacRaths, as they were then known, an alliance was struck with the Bissetts of the Aird. So much so, that in the mid-twelfth century the sobriquet earned by the MacRaes was 'The Brazen Wall of the Bissetts'. Since their duties included expeditions to collect rents in Glenelg for the Bissetts, it is evident that MacRaes had business in Kintail two centuries before the Mackenzies had any influence there. The popular notion that MacRaes have always been a sept of the Mackenzies can therefore be dispelled.

The Lovat family inherited the lands of the Aird from the marriage with a Bisset heiress and expanded into Strathglass. MacRaes continued in their positions of high standing with the Frasers of Lovat and a long enduring association with that clan ensued. According to tradition, one of the sons of MacRae of Clunes killed one of the sons of Lovat in consequence of some petty argument. As a result the young MacRae concerned, Ian Charrich (Restless John) was obliged to leave the territory and settled in Kintail. There he found plentiful employment defending the newly acquired Mackenzie territories. His younger brother, Finlay, soon followed him to Kintail and became the founder of the most well-documented branch of the Clan MacRae and from whom Christopher I of Strathglass was descended.

The first tangible record of MacRaes on Chisholm lands of Strathglass seems to occur about the middle of the sixteenth century and it is from that era the history of the Strathglass branch of The Clan MacRae begins. This came about in the following circumstances:

Since the banishment of the young MacRaes from the Lovat estates on the Aird around the mid 13th century, two branches of the family had spent a century or so in Kintail as vassals of the Mackenzies, whose power and influence they helped establish there. One of the branches, the descendants of Finlay above mentioned, had won great renown as staunch defenders of Mackenzie interests in Wester Ross and the defence of Eilean Donan in particular against the Macdonalds.

In 1539 Duncan, a prominent member of this branch, with just a handful of defenders successfully repressed an attack on Eilean Donan by Donald Gorm Macdonald of Sleat. Unfortunately the Constable of Eilean Donan at the time, a Mathieson, was killed in the attack, and so Duncan put in for the job. Although the MacRaes had always rendered the Mackenzies of Kintail very great service, so did other clans. John of Killin, The Mackenzie Chief of that time, thought Duncan too impetuous for the job. What is more important he did not want to be seen favouring MacRaes over MacLennans and so appointed a Murchison as the new Constable of Eilean Donan.

Consequently, Duncan MacRae, feeling offended and grossly undervalued left Kintail in disgust and returned to the Fraser country in Lower Strathglass when enticed by Lord Lovat. Duncan was rewarded with hunting rights in Culigran in Strathfarrar. However, within a short time Duncan had virtually depleted the deer herds in the forests of Erchless and Ben Vachart. In the interests of conservation, Lovat persuaded Duncan to take alternative lands at Crochail in Strathglass proper.

While in self-imposed exile in Strathglass, Duncan MacRae took with him his new spouse who happened to be the widow of John Dubh Mathieson the late Constable of Eilean Donan. Before Mathieson, Duncan's spouse had been married to Sir Dougal Mackenzie, a Priest, and a member of The House of Kintail. The relevance of this is as follows: Duncan's brother Finlay Dubh MacRae had married Sir Dougal's daughter Isabel Mackenzie, who also happened to be the daughter of Duncan's spouse. In other words, her brother-in-law was also her father-in-law. Whilst visiting her mother in Crochel upon the occasion of Finlay visiting his brother, Isabel became acquainted with Alister Dubh, a son of Chisholm of Comer. Alister Dubh was fatally attracted to Isabel and Finlay was advised to return home to Aryugan in Kintail sooner than he would otherwise have done.

Soon after, Alister Dubh travelled to Kintail with some confidants and awaiting his chance when Finlay was away, persuaded Isabel to leave her husband and return with him to Strathglass. By all accounts the separation

seemed amicable. Finlay was not moved to reclaim his wife believing she encouraged Chisholm and to conclude the deal he even arranged for one of their children to be sent later to join his mother in her new home. This son, Christopher, was to become the founder of the Strathglass MacRaes, his descendants identifiable by the patronymic 'MacGillechriosd' or McGilchrist.

By all accounts, Christopher's new stepfather, Alistair Dubh Chisholm was by no means an ideal preceptor. Apparently, Alistair (or Alexander) Dubh was married previously to a daughter of a Forbes, whose family was earlier displaced from Strathglass by the Chisholms. Having had a serious dispute with his father-in-law, Alexander pursued him from the church at Clachan of Comar and stabbed him to death in a field at Kerrow. He is also blamed for the murder of a member of the Lovat Family. It may be with some justification that later historians described Alistair Dubh as an 'evil miscreant'. What happened to Alistair Dubh and his line is uncertain but it is supposed none remained in the Highlands by the late 19th Century.

Turning to dates in question, it seems likely that this Alistair Dubh who would have 'flourished' around 1550, was one of two sons of Wiland, XII Chief of the Clan Chisholm. Alistair was reported to have been 'a wild young man who refused to obey his father' and it is quite possible he was disinherited for his deeds, thus enabling his younger brother John, a quieter and more predictable person, to be served heir to the Barony of Comar and Chiefship of the Chisholms.

Interestingly, in 1540, Inverness Sheriff Court proceedings cite arguments for John Chisholm of Comer and others, who had a charter of liferent of Invercannich from deceased William (Wiland) Chisolme of Comer and Alexander his son and apparent heir. Therefore, it seems quite likely that the succession to the Chisholm lands between the two brothers was not a straightforward case of primogeniture.

Young Christopher MacRae, the first of Strathglass, would have been about eight years of age at the date in question, circa 1550. He is said to have become 'an able and rich man, and an excellent member of society in his new home'. The progenitor of The MacRaes 'of' Strathglass, Christopher and his line were reputed to be amongst the best tacksmen in that area. They held positions of great trust and responsibility in The Chisholm's employ. They intermarried with some of the principal cadet families of the Chisholm clan.

Indeed it may be true to say The MacRaes in Strathglass were as much and possibly more their 'own men' on Chisholm lands as they were on Mackenzie or Fraser territories. This appears to be so because although MacRaes acknowledged The Chisholm as feudal superior they did not automatically become part of his fighting machine. Neither did they go running back to Kintail whenever Mackenzies beckoned. It is apparent the (McGilchrist) MacRaes 'of' Strathglass became established as an independent branch of the Clan MacRae over four centuries with their own chief and cadet families and maintained a separate identity both from their Chisholm and Fraser feudal superiors in Strathglass and from their ancestral kinspeople in Kintail.

There is evidence that Strathglass MacRaes fought with the Chisholms, under the command of John II of Knockfin, at Sheriffmuir in the 1715 Rebellion. A generation later several MacRaes are said to have fought in Chisholm's regiment at Culloden. Indeed it would be more surprising if they had not because they were very well integrated into Chisholm society in Strathglass by that time. It would be difficult to call them separate clans, the families were so inter-related. Like their Chisholm kinspeople in the '45' MacRae allegiances appeared split, with some staying out of the conflict altogether. Ironically some Kintail MacRaes who were under Seaforth's orders to stay out of the conflict were so desperate to join the Prince's cause they joined up with McDonnell of Glengarry, an old enemy. However, such tactics were essential for survival of a clan in any district where it was thought prudent in volatile times not to have all the eggs in one basket.

To return to the account of the MacRaes establishment in Strathglass, the situation would have perhaps been more complex had it not been for Duncan MacRae's exile on the adjacent Lovat lands of Crochel. This exile was eventually ended at approximately the same time as his nephew Christopher arrived. A warrior of Duncan's calibre was always in demand back in Kintail and the Mackenzie Chief, John of Killin visited him frequently at Crochel in efforts to secure his return. However, Lovat was equally anxious to retain his services and offered to Duncan the lands of Clunes in the Aird where his ancestors held before the migration to Kintail.

Although, Duncan was agreeable to this transaction it never came about due to Lovat having died on his travels during which he was to have the legal titles registered for the conveyance. Duncan had no confidence in Lovat's heir honouring the undertakings and went instead back to Kintail in 1557 which left Christopher as the sole MacRae in Strathglass whose dynasty were to intermarry with and enjoy positions of prestige and responsibility in association with the Clan Chisholm over the next four hundred years.

Those MacRaes who became established in Strathglass, the descendants of Christopher I, appear to have prospered as tacksmen. If other MacRaes were Mackenzies Shirt of Mail and The Brazen Wall of the Bissetts, then perhaps the more peaceably disposed Strathglass branch could be described as The Golden Caschrom of The Chisholms. (Caschrom being a sort of hand plough used in arable farming in the Highlands)

In the 16th/17th centuries, MacRaes in Strathglass seem to be known mainly by their aliases and one of these was undoubtedly McEan (sometimes McAne) Vic Conchie, (son of John, son of Kenneth) which is used interchangeably with Alexander McRa in 1695. Another common alias is McConiche vic Gillichreist (son of Kenneth, son of Christopher) appearing in legal processes in Comer in 1670. The patronymic: Vic (or Mhic) Conchie or Conniche Gilchrist means son of Kenneth of the (Mac) Gilchrist family, namely the MacRaes 'of' Strathglass.

There seem to be several reasons for the use of such aliases. These were generally patronymics and were used interchangeably with the surname. Where there was risk of confusion of the surname the patronymic chain of names was used. In the case of the surname being 'of' a place there was less chance of confusion. As MacRaes were not superiors on Chisholm lands and in 16th/17th Centuries not identifiable as 'of' a place, then clearly confusion could arise between different individuals. Often of course it was simply a case that the head of the family only used the surname and offspring and cadets used patronymics.

In the 17th/18th centuries, the Strathglass MacRaes were not always known by the clan surname because of the widespread influence of their cousins the Inverinate MacRaes from Kintail who at one time held vast tracts of Strathglass under charters of apprising against The Chisholm. This was apparently security for moneys loaned. As the Inverinates' power and influence waned, the indigenous MacGilchrist MacRaes in Strathglass came to prominence.

By the late 1600s it is clear from land transactions that Christopher's descendants are holding positions of importance in the Chisholm barony. Specific references exist to Christopher MacRae, Chamberlain of Comer and Strathglass in the early 1700s, and it is likely that MacRaes of Strathglass were as highly regarded in Chisholm circles as their cousins in Kintail were to the Mackenzies. Strathglass MacRaes were carrying out legal and fiduciary duties for the Chisholm. They were the Baileys and Officials of the Baron Court of The Chisholm of Comar.

As stated above Christopher MacRae I of Strathglass had his origins in Kintail. His father was Finlay Dubh, direct descendant of Finlay Dubh McGillechrist with whom the recent recorded history of the MacRaes begins. Finlay Dubh was the fifth Kintail generation of this family and possibly the eldest son of Christopher IV Constable of Eilean Donan in 1511. Some considered this the most important position in Kintail in the service of the Mackenzies, and some mystique has grown up around the notion that the holder of the job is somehow the head of the Kintail MacRaes. Finlay's brother Duncan tried very hard to attain this position but John of Killin, the Mackenzie Chief of the day denied it him.

In most references to the MacRaes as a Clan they seem allied to larger Clans with a feudal power base. Early accounts would suggest they were supporters of the Earls of Ross, then the Bissetts, then Lovat Frasers, then Seaforth Mackenzies. In Strathglass, in the period under discussion, clearly they were allied to the Chisholms. Therefore, it becomes easier to understand why the MacRaes have never had an overall chief of their own name. 'Chief' in the Highlands at the relevant times meant feudal superior over an expanse of territory and head of family over those of his own name. Latter day claimants to the alleged Chiefship of the Clan MacRae as a whole seem largely a nonsense in historical terms as they did not possess the dual qualification of feudal superior and universally acknowledged tribal head at any relevant time before the abolition of heritable jurisdictions in 1747.

The reason for this appears to be that because The MacRaes were an indigenous race of Pictish origin, they had no system of hereditary land- owning before the Normans came in the twelfth century. The concept was alien to them. It is evident that a pact was reached with the Norman incomers and MacRaes retained large tracts of land in the Aird at one time. Such lands included Easter and Wester Clunes, Aucheyvaich, Abriachan, Kilfinan, Kil-St ninian, Corryfoyness and Carrowgare. An advantageous marriage with the MacLeans of Urquhart brought them Drumbuy. Why they later became dissociated with these possessions remains unclear but it was probably only a very gradual process.

The outcome of this was that the MacRaes developed as separate and distinct families or branch-clans under the authority of their own leading tacksmen or territorial chieftains who were usually also tribally inter-related through a common ancestry with the MacRaes of 13th century Clunes. It has been observed that these

families were on more or less an equal footing. Historically, MacRaes seemed less concerned with issues of inheritance of Chiefship where none seemed to exist to unite their diverse and scattered families. Instead a sort of meritocracy prevailed amongst the Macraes where the family of the man with the top job tended to be regarded as the most important in a particular area and the pecking order was thus established.

Such a meritocracy was the Inverinate Macraes who had considerable business with the Chisholms of Comer. This is evidenced in a proliferation of land deeds and tacks between 1636 and 1676. One of the celebrated Chieftains of Inverinate was Duncan Macrae known as Donnachaidh nam Pios (Donald of The Silver Cups) due to the excellence of his tableware when entertaining. In olden days Strathglass was a well-known through-route from Inverness to the West Coast and Kintail and also on the main drove road from Inverness to the South via Glen Moriston. Macraes were great cattle rearers and their drovers regularly plied the Strath and Glen Cannich to and from the markets. In the main, the lands leased from The Chisholms were high pasture such as Glen Affric and Mullardoch: areas, which bordered on Macrae lands in Kintail and these were for cattle grazing primarily in the summer months.

To obtain some idea of the scale and extent of Macrae influence on Chisholm lands, it is helpful to refer to some legal matters. In 1656, Alexander Chisholm of Comer gave a bond of surety for a sum of money loaned by Alexander Macrae of Inverinate who was said to be The Chamberlain of Kintail. Upon the death of Alexander, his son Duncan Macrae was attempting unsuccessfully to obtain repayment of the loan and eventually settled for a Charter of apprising over Chisholm lands. This was described as a Crown Charter in favour of Duncan Macrae of Inverinate over the lands of Meikle Comer, Comericroy, Comerkirktoune, Knockfin, Affrick, Invercannich (including Carrie, Craskie, Shilvannich, Muckerach, Leadir and Mullardoch) Breakachy, Cunnaskiach, Ardblair and Clunieackie. Further lands were mortgaged to Duncan's younger brother The Rev John Macrae who was minister of Kilmorack and later Dingwall. Whilst a Charter of apprising is an inferior form of tenure, allowing for reversion of lands when a debt is paid, nonetheless large tracts of Strathglass were for considerable periods of time held as security by Macraes.

All in all the Inverinate Macraes had for a considerable period quite a stranglehold on Chisholm Lands. It would seem this situation was terminated more by luck than by deliberate intention. The story is told how Duncan Macrae lost the lands upon returning from Edinburgh with the deeds and charters by drowning when nearly home and having the papers swept away in the current. This was sometime around the year 1700.

Another tale is recounted about Maurice Macrae known as 'Muireach Fial', which translated means Maurice The Generous. Maurice, born about 1580, was the brother (possibly twin) of Rev Farquhar MacRae, Constable of Eilean Donan. Maurice was characterised as being 'a strong and industrious man and a man of means'. He is said to have loaned substantial sums of money to The Chisholm and received in return grazing land in Glen Affric. These transactions would have taken place in the earlier part of the 17th century, a period in which there is evidence of Macrae tacks for sheilings in that area. Maurice is said to have met his death through his own generosity. Having met up with some Chisholms on the way home from a business trip to Inverness, Maurice took a drink with them at The Struy Inn. He never returned to Kintail, and was later found drowned in the River Glass.

The Chisholms were strongly suspected of the disposal of Maurice but nothing could be proved. Soon after a party of Kintail Macraes arrived in Strathglass to take Maurice's body back and whilst passing Clachan Comer with his body noticed the burial taking place of one of the prominent Chisholms. The Macraes stepped into the sacred burial ground amidst the Chisholm funeral party and seized the gravestone that was about to be laid. It is said they did this to try to provoke a fight that they might have the opportunity of avenging Maurice's murder. Legend has it that as the challenge was not accepted the Macraes carried the stone block away all the way back to Kintail and placed it on Maurice's grave.

Yet another MacRae family established in Glencannich were the Macraes of Choire Dhomhain who resided to the South of the Glen beneath the towering heights of Carn Eighe and Tom A' Choinich. They descended from another famous archer known as Finlay Dubh nam Fiadh (Black Finlay of The Deer). His patronymic was Finlay Dubh MacIain Mhic Dhomh'uill Mhoir. In the mid sixteenth century there was turmoil between the Mackenzies and the Macdonalds, particularly the Lochalsh and Glengarry branches. Macdonalds had to traverse Mackenzie and Chisholm Territories travel between their own scattered lands in the West. The trespassers often committed acts of violence and cattle rustling, and disputes and feuds frequently arose.

At that time large parts of Glencannich belonged to Mackenzie of Gairloch who installed Finlay MacRae as his forester and bailiff to look after the deer herds. One of Glengarry's tribe had meantime settled in Glen

Affric and frequently resorted to hunting expeditions to Glasleter, a neighbouring deer forest under Finlay's care. The Macdonald refused to desist and in the ensuing conflict was killed by Finlay. The Glengarry's suspecting what had happened sent a party to avenge their kinsman but they were all poisoned in Finlay's house, apparently by his wife's cooking. Another party of Macdonalds was sent and this time Finlay picked them off one by one with his bow and arrow as they left his house after having raided it. The area later came into the possession of The Chisholm who allowed Black Finlay and his descendants to remain and some families of MacRaes to the present day can trace their descent to the famous archer of the Clan.

However, there is no doubt that the most important branch of the MacRaes in Strathglass were the descendants of Christopher, a family distinguished by the use of the patronymic Macgilchrist. They became closely related to the Chisholms of Knockfin, Lietry and Struy. Besides being prominent Tacksmen, and Chamberlains of Strathglass, members of this branch were famously Clergymen and Military men. They were related closely and hence share the distinguished ancestries of the principal Chisholm, Mackenzie and Fraser families. It is also evident that the Kintail Macraes perpetuated links with their Strathglass MacRae cousins and there were many marriages between members of the estranged branches. Despite this MacRaes were never united into one Clan as such.

To conclude, there is no clearer evidence of an independently established branch of The Clan MacRae than there is for The MacRaes of Strathglass. Popular belief has it that the MacRaes were a clan that existed only in the shadow of The Mackenzies and due to the prominence of that association, the Kintail branches have somehow sought to derive precedence. Detailed study of displaced branches of the MacRaes will show that MacRaes were no more a sept of the Mackenzies than they were of the Frasers, Chisholms and Bissetts or any other clan whose lands they settled upon as tacksmen and tenants.

Consequently, there is no longer a valid argument for holding that The Mackenzies or the families of MacRae with precedence in Kintail held any sway over MacRaes settled in other parts or indeed have any exclusive claim to Chiefship of the whole name of MacRae. It seems the only way that the question of the Chiefship of The Clan MacRae will ever be resolved is for all interested to realise there has never been for many hundreds of years any single "representer" as such and that any precedence deriving from the descent of such a "chief" is uncertain and may never be proved.

In such circumstances a modern method of establishing clan chiefs has been evolved: the ad hoc derbhfine. This is based upon the election of a chief from prominent members of the clan (usually country 'landed' families and armigerous branch representatives). This method is very much a "putsch", and seems to conveniently ignore the fact that if a clan never had a chief then the establishment of such a position in the modern age would be a historical nonsense. The MacRaes cannot derive a chief from primogeniture because that is a feudal concept and was evolved to settle lands and estates on the first born and maintain continuity. Neither is it feasible to elect a chief who would be drawn from worthies of the present and recent past, taking no account of the long-term social mobility and volatility of families where fortunes can go down as well as up and lines of succession can extinguish themselves naturally or become enmeshed in argument and controversy. Stability and continuity cannot be grafted into existence by artificial adoption of some figurehead that is alien to the nature of the MacRaes as a clan. As an essentially tribal organisation, the MacRaes must continue to be represented by their various branch representers, their veritable Chieftains whose existence and status is historic fact. A 'Chief' of the MacRaes would be as much a reality as 'Brigadoon'.

Peter A. MacRae - London 1998

Footnote: The writer was a 14th generation descendant from Christopher, the First Strathglass MacRae. He died in 2002. He was on a History of The MacRaes in Strathglass. In future editions he planned to explore in more detail, the connections between the MacRaes of Strathglass and their contacts with adjacent clans.