

THE SCOTS CANADIAN

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Margaret MacMillan named Scot of the Year 2022

Since 1993, the Scottish Studies Society has been recognizing individuals who have achieved distinction through their contribution to Canadian society or the international community at large by presenting them with its Annual Scot of the Year Award and we are delighted to have distinguished Canadian historian Margaret MacMillan as this year's recipient.

Margaret received a BA in history from the University of Toronto, where she attended Trinity College. She would later become Provost 2002–2007. She holds a Bachelor of Philosophy degree in politics and a PhD (1974) from Oxford University. She was Warden at Oxford's St. Antony's College from 2007 to 2017. Her doctoral dissertation was on the social and political perspectives of the British in India. She is the author of *Women of the Raj*.

From 1975 to 2002, she was a professor of history at Ryerson University in Toronto, including five years as department chair. In addition to numerous articles and reviews on



Margaret MacMillan will be presented with the Scot of the Year Award on Friday, September 9th at the University of Toronto's Trinity College.

Details are on our website at www.scottishstudies.com

a variety of Canadian and world affairs,

From 1995 to 2003, Margaret co-edited the *International Journal*, published by the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. She previously served as a member of the National Board of Directors of the Canadian International Council, and currently sits on the International Journal's Editorial Board.

She was the Young Memorial Visitor at Royal Military College of Canada in 2004 and delivered the J.D. Young Memorial Lecture on November 24, 2004.

Margaret's research has focused on the British Empire in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and on international relations in the 20th century. Over the course of her career, she has taught a range of courses on the history of international relations. She is a member of the European Advisory Board of Princeton University Press.

In December 2017, MacMillan became an honorary fellow at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.

One of her most successful works is *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. *Peacemakers* won the Duff Cooper Prize for outstanding literary work in the field of history, biography or politics; the Hessel-Tiltman Prize for History; the prestigious Samuel Johnson Prize for the best work of non-fiction published in the United Kingdom and the 2003 Governor General's Literary Award in Canada.

Her most recent book *War: How Conflict Shaped Us* looks at the ways in which war has influenced human society and how it changes political organizations, technology, and ideologies.

Margaret has served on the boards of the Canadian Institute for International Affairs, the Atlantic Council of Canada, the Ontario Heritage Foundation, Historica and the Churchill Society for the Advancement of Parliamentary Democracy (Canada). She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, an Honorary Fellow of St Antony's College, Oxford and a Senior Fellow of Massey College, University of Toronto. She has honorary degrees from the University of King's College, the Royal Military College of Canada and Ryerson University, Toronto.

She was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in February 2006. She was promoted to Companion of the Order of Canada on December 30, 2015, the highest grade of the honour. In the 2018 Queen's New Year's Honours List, Professor MacMillan was appointed a Companion of Honour (CH) for services to higher education, history and international affairs.

In September 2021 she was appointed Engelsberg Chair in History and International Affairs at LSE IDEAS, the foreign policy think tank at the London School of Economics where the topic of her lectures *Alliances in war* could not be more timely given the situation in Ukraine.



THE SCOTTISH STUDIES FOUNDATION

Charitable registration
No. 119253490 RR0001
www.scottishstudies.com

Membership Secretary:
Catherine McKenzie
admin@scottishstudies.com

Newsletter Editor:
David Hunter
davidhunter@scottishstudies.com

Editorial Adviser:
Ed Patrick

From the President

Dear fellow members,

On behalf of all of us on the Board of Directors, thank you for your support, contributions and encouragement which have enabled us to maintain operational during the pandemic.

As I mentioned previously, our focus is now concentrated on providing Scottish Studies students with financial support and in view of this we have implemented a change to our funding commitments. For many years we set aside about \$13,000 to help cover the cost of University of Guelph's Scottish Studies office staff, lecture payments and publications. However, from now on these costs will be paid out of the Foundation's Scottish Studies Chair endowment fund that was established back in 2004. This will free up all donations to go towards helping students with the cost of tuition.

We have also modified the eligibility criteria for our endowed Scottish Studies Undergraduate Award which previously required students to take specific courses. The eligibility is now more generic and allows students who have completed or are taking any of the topics in Scottish History and/or who have conducted research using the University of Guelph's extensive Scottish Studies Collection to apply. This award provides recipients with \$4,000 per year and was set up with the assistance of the Ontario government's OSOTF (Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Funds) program and every dollar of donation received for student assistance is matched by the government on a dollar-for-dollar basis. There are two major conditions for all OSOTF awards: recipients must be Ontario residents and demonstrate financial need.

I am also pleased to announce that a new award has been established in memory of Duncan Campbell — one of our longest serving board members who was very taken with the idea of young Canadians being able to learn about their ancestral country of Scotland in a Canadian university. The Duncan Campbell Memorial Travel Grant is a graduate award for part-time or full-time students registered in a masters or doctoral program in the Department of History and who are pursuing travel to Scotland for Scottish-related research. The award will provide students with \$1,000 per year for five years.

In closing, I thank you again for your support. It has been crucial in ensuring that the Scottish tradition in Canada at the academic level remains both strong and secure. Best wishes to you all, and stay safe.

David Hunter

Farewell to Harry and Ted

Sadly, since the publication of our last newsletter, we had to bid farewell to two individuals who were instrumental in establishing the Foundation.

Harry Ferguson, who passed away on October 17, 2021 was the Foundation's first president and worked hard to obtain the foundations charitable status in 1986. Harry was born in 1933 and grew up in the Govan area on the Clyde in Glasgow which at that time was famous for its shipbuilding and related industries. He left school at the age of 16 to work as an apprentice electrical draftsman at the Fairfield Shipbuilding and Engineering Company, specializing in the complex electrical systems used in warships and frigates. In the evening he studied electrical engineering and physics at the Royal College of science and Technology (now Strathclyde University).

He moved to Canada in 1958 where he worked for Inglis Home Appliances, Bedard Gerard, the National Research Council, and Ontario's Ministry of Industry and Tourism — the latter position allowing him to lead trade missions all over the world. After leaving public service, he worked in merchant finance, and in gold, oil and gas mining. In the final decades of his career, Harry turned his hand to the restaurant industry. Having spotted the trend early on, he worked to expand *Mac's Sushi* (a chain of sushi kiosks) across Ontario.

As well as his role in the establishment of the Scottish Studies Foundation, he also served as President of the Sir Walter Scott Society at the University of Toronto — his interest in Sir Walter Scott being kindled when, as a teenager, his father came up with the idea of paying him a pound for each of the Scott's Waverley novels that he read.



Even well into his eighties, Harry enjoyed working five days a week and sailing out on Lake Ontario in "Jenny Geddes," his 28 ft. sailboat, often seen flying a large Lion Rampant spinnaker. His love of sailing inspired him to come up with the idea of chartering Canada's largest sailing ship "The Empire Sandy" to allow Foundation members to commemorate the arrival of

Scots pioneer ship "The Hector" which arrived in Nova Scotia in 1773. This became an annual event and provided a unique opportunity for participants to share the experience of a voyage on a tall ship under full sail in an attempt to recapture the spirit of Canada's pioneers.

Harry will be missed by his family, both here and abroad, and by the countless friends he made throughout his life journey.

Also, it is with deep sadness that I had to report that our good friend and colleague Professor Ted Cowan died suddenly on January 2, this year.



Ted Cowan was the former Director of the University of Glasgow's Dumfries Campus and Professor of Scottish History and Literature. His main research interests included the history of Viking Scotland, the Scottish Wars of Independence, Early Modern Scottish Political Thought, the Covenants, Scottish Emigration history and the Scots in the Arctic and Pacific North West. From 1979 to 1983, Ted was Professor of history and chair of Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph.

In his tribute to Professor Cowan, Dr. Kevin James who holds the Scottish Studies Foundation Chair in Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph stated:

"Professor Ted Cowan was a towering figure in stature and in intellectual influence. At the University of Guelph, where he played a critical and decisive role in continuing the pioneering work of Rev Dr Stanford Reid and others in building Scottish Studies as a field. He was renowned for his bonhomie, his mentorship and his rigorous scholarship.

"Ted Cowan delighted the Scottish-Canadian community with his dynamism and erudition: his legacy includes partnerships which established the Scottish Studies Foundation, which has in turn created the first Scottish Studies research chair in North America. From 1979 to 1993 Ted Cowan guided the Scottish Studies programme at Guelph from strength to strength, and epitomized the community-engaged scholar. His studies of early-modern popular culture and belief in Scotland captivated readers,

engaged public audiences, and advanced scholarship in the field.

"A polymath and gregarious scholar, Ted Cowan was a bright light in the Scottish Studies firmament, a beloved teacher and colleague, and a scholar whose departure for the University of Glasgow—a mark of the international esteem in which he was held—was received with equal parts regret and pride by the Scottish-Canadian community whom he had served so faithfully during his tenure at Guelph. He left a dynamic programme with an international reputation for research excellence, a coterie of exceptional graduates who had benefited from his tutelage, and a wider community whom he had inspired and educated during his time in Canada.

"We extend our deepest sympathies to Ted's family on both sides of the ocean. His memory is dear to us at the University of Guelph. We are grateful for the time he spent here, and for all that he did for so many people, and in so many ways, to advance the University's mission to improve life."

Ted was one of a kind and will be sorely missed.

Upcoming Zoom Talks

Following up on the worldwide popularity of our series of last year's online Zoom Talks, we are in the process of preparing a new schedule for the 2022-23 season which started with a couple of talks by University of Dundee PhD students that Professor Graeme Morton has arranged for us. Graeme previously held the inaugural Scottish Studies Foundation Chair at the University of Guelph from 2004 to 2013 and is now Professor of Modern History and Director of the Centre for Scottish Culture at the University of Dundee.

The first of these was a talk by PhD student Chloe Anderson-Wheatley who is based in the Falkland Islands where she works as Records Manager & Policy Officer in the Policy and Economic Development Unit. The talk on May 28 looked at National Identity in the Falkland Islands.

On June 11, PhD student Remigio Petrocelli gave us an insight into his research into the Italian Diaspora in Scotland during the 1920s and 1930s — examining aspects of Italian culture in Scotland and support for fascism within the Italian-Scots community at that time.

Additional talks to be scheduled later will include a presentation by Professor Graeme Morton on Neo Jacobitism in late Victorian Scotland and a talk by Dr. Elizabeth Ewan titled *A Brewing Storm: Alewives in sixteenth-century Inverness*. Elizabeth recently retired as Professor of Medieval and Early Modern Scottish History at the University of Guelph, and is a trailblazer in

the history of medieval and early modern Scotland.

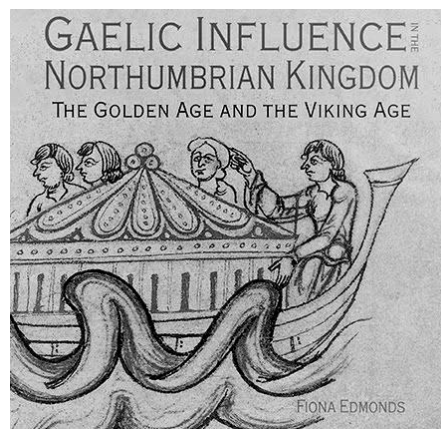
As well, a couple of our board members have also been hard at work getting their talks ready for presentation.

Editor, publisher and author Douglas Gibson has been researching the area around the farm occupied by the Laidlaw family — the forebears of Alice Ann Laidlaw who we know as Nobel Prize winning author Alice Munro. The farm is located on The Southern Upland Way, a long distance coast-to-coast walk in the Scottish Borders. The farm is now being used as a bothy (known as Over Phawhope Bothy) which provides free basic shelter for hikers and visitors. Douglas has discovered that the area is also close to the Marchbanks Farm which has a connection to Robertson Davies, the famous Canadian novelist, playwright, critic, journalist, and professor, who in 1944, created the character Samuel Marchbanks as his pseudonym while he was editor of the Peterborough Examiner newspaper. Once his research is complete Douglas will prepare an online talk which will be added to the series.

Dr. Kate Ashley who teaches French, English and Translation at Acadia University in Nova Scotia, will be giving a talk on the book she has just completed and which is due to be released shortly. Titled *Robert Louis Stevenson and Nineteenth-Century French Literature Literary Relations at the Fin de Siècle*, the book is a comparative literary history that looks at French literature from Stevenson's perspective and at Stevenson from a French perspective.

Details on all talks will be emailed to members and will be posted on our website.

Frank Watson Book Prize winner announced



The Centre for Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph is delighted to announce that the Frank Watson Book Prize for the best book or monograph published on Scottish History in 2019 and 2020 has been awarded to Dr. Fiona Edmonds for her book, *Gaelic Influence in the Northumbrian*

Kingdom: The Golden Age and the Viking Age. The prize committee is very pleased to honour Dr. Edmonds alongside the past winners. The Frank Watson Book Prize is awarded in odd-numbered years for the best monograph, edited collection and/or book-length original work on Scottish History published in the previous two years. The prize consists of a cash award, an invitation to present a plenary lecture and permission to advertise success in the competition.

It was established more than 20 years ago by Dr. Cicely Watson, a champion of educational reform in Ontario, in memory of her husband Dr. Frank Watson. Cicely and Frank were long-time supporters of the Scottish Studies Foundation and their association with Scottish Studies at Guelph dates back to 1968.



Fiona Edmonds (pictured above) is Reader in History and Director of the Regional Heritage Centre at Lancaster University and her book is the first full-scale, interdisciplinary treatment of the wide-ranging connections between the Gaelic world and the historic Northumbrian kingdom — the most northerly Anglo-Saxon kingdom of England.

Her book explores influences that emanated from the Gaelic-speaking world, including Ireland, the Isle of Man, Argyll and the kingdom of Alba (the nascent Scottish kingdom). It encompasses Northumbria's "Golden Age", the kingdom's political and scholarly high-point of the seventh and early eighth centuries, and culminates with the kingdom's decline and fragmentation in the Viking Age, which opened up new links with Gaelic-Scandinavian communities.

Political and ecclesiastical connections are discussed in detail and the study also covers linguistic contact, material culture and the practicalities of travel, bringing out the realities of contemporary life. This interdisciplinary approach sheds new light on the west and north of the Northumbrian kingdom, the areas linked most closely with the Gaelic world. Overall, the book reveals the extent to which Gaelic influence was multi-faceted, complex and enduring.

Sticks and Stones

By Helen E. Patterson

Over the brow of the hill came a man, leading a pony on which sat a small child. The man wore a tartan plaid, keeping him warm, warding off the mist and rain which had been falling fitfully through most of their journey.

The child was wrapped in a blanket which obscured all but the eyes. A knitted tam was pulled down almost to meet the blanket. It was only by coming close that one could discover it was a small girl, of about seven years.

She sat astride the sturdy Highland pony almost the same grey-white colour as the mist that swept by them, carried by the wind off the water far below them.

From time to time, the man glanced back at the girl, and smiled.

"You all right, missie?" he asked.

"Yes, Dada," a small, muffled voice answered. "Can we stop soon? My bum is sore."

The man laughed.

"So are my legs. I think we should stop and let the pony rest as well, though a wee mite such as yourself can't be much of a burden to him."

When they reached a more sheltered spot, the man stopped, lifted the child from the pony's back and set her on the ground.

"Are we almost there yet?" she asked.

"Almost."

"Where are we going, Dada?"

"I told you, Emmie. You're going to your auntie's and I'm going to see Iain MacGregor."

"Can't I go with you?"

"Do you not like staying with your auntie?"

"Not very much. Her house smells funny, and she never has nice things for tea." The little girl yawned.

"Are you that tired, little one?"

She nodded.

"Are you hungry?"

She nodded again, more vigorously.

"Well, let me get a fire going. I'll brew some tea and we can have some of the sweet buns your mam made. Will that keep you from starving, do you think?"

The girl paused in her struggle to free herself from the blanket. She regarded her father, a trace of a smile brightening her face.

"That's silly," she said. "You said we're almost there. We are, aren't we, Dada?"

"Aye, not much farther."

"So, can I go with you?"

"Not this time, love. I've a bone to pick with MacGregor and he won't be well pleased to see me. I don't want you in the way if things get unpleasant. I'd have left



"Father, Daughter and Pony." From a painting by Arthur John Elsley

you home but you know your mam's not well and you're sure to get into mischief on your own."

The girl opened her mouth to protest but a stern look from her father silenced her. She tried another subject.

"Mam says you're angry with Iain MacGregor because he called you a bad name."

Her father looked at her for a long moment, before replying.

"Aye," he said.

"What was the bad name?"

"Never you mind what it was. It wasn't fit for young ears. And it wasn't the first time he's been so bold, or so foul. It may be the last, though. Now let me get the tea."

The girl stood watching her father as he gathered bits of grass and peat and set them alight with pieces of flint.

"What will you do with Iain MacGregor, Dada?" she asked.

The man looked up from the fire but did not answer.

"Will you fight him, like cousin Jamie fought that Sassenach? Mam said the Sassenach died after."

The man poked at the fire and fed it another handful of dried grass.

"If need be," he said, his voice low and gruff. "Now let me get on with this. I've told you all you should hear."

The girl, thwarted, now regarded her surroundings.

"May I go and play on those rocks until tea is ready?" She pointed to a large pile of hewn stones close at hand.

Her father again looked up from his task, then frowned.

"May I, Dada? Please?"

"All right, but stay where I can see you. And don't go near the edge of the cliff beyond. If you fall down there, having a sore bum will be the least of your worries."

"Yes, Dada,"

The man watched as she ran over to the nearest pile, an errant beam of sunlight cutting through the clouds, shining on her like a beacon. He returned to his task, never taking his eyes from his daughter for more than a few moments at a time. When the tea was ready, he called out.

"Emmie, come away before the tea gets cold."

The girl started back, her attention focussed on something in her hand. She seated herself beside the small fire, her eyes still rivetted to the object in her grasp.

"What have you got there, Emmie?"

"I don't know, Dada. It's a funny wee rock, I think. I found it on the ground over there." She held it up for her father's inspection.

The man took it and brought it closer to his eyes.

"It's no rock, Emmie. It's a piece of bone. And it's very old." He passed the fragment back.

"Where did it come from, Dada?"

The man stared out over the rocks, to the dim line of water beyond, almost obscured by mist.

"There used to be a sort of castle there, on the edge of the cliff. The rocks you were playing in are all that is left. It was a long time ago, hundreds of years."

"When you were little?"

"Long before that, you cheeky thing."

"What happened to the castle? Did it fall down?"

“No. The man who was building it never finished it, and another man tore it down.”

“Why did he do that?”

“Here, drink your tea and eat your sweet bun. I’ll tell you the story that my dada told me.”

There was a man named Cam who was quite wealthy. He had bags of money, fat cattle, sturdy ponies and lived in a fine big stone castle. But like a lot of wealthy people, he wasn’t content. He wanted more than wealth. He wanted respect.

Cam had a cousin named Egan, who was the chief of the clan. Ever since Cam and Egan had been small boys, they had been rivals. No matter what task or skill or art Cam attempted, Egan always seemed to best him. Egan was even better looking, a better dancer and was much more popular with the young ladies, than was Cam.

Egan took a great deal of pleasure in pointing all of this out to Cam, calling him a clumsy oaf, a hapless fool and even questioning if his father was really his father. What made it worse was that Egan had taken to doing so, in the presence of the young ladies of the clan, most of whom now only giggled, scoffed and turned away whenever Cam approached any of them. When it seemed that the whole clan was laughing at him, Cam had had enough. Egan must be stopped. But what could he do?

Cam pondered this for a while, but the answer was very simple, he decided. Egan must die. Since Egan was not subject to fits or fevers or any sort of malady that would send him to an early grave, Cam would have to help him along. In those ancient times, it was not uncommon for one’s rival to be killed off either in battle, in single combat or by devious means. But Cam wasn’t an especially strong fighter, nor was he clever enough to concoct some dire form of poison. He would have to find another way. Soon, an idea came to him.

Cam sat himself behind his great desk, sharpened a quill, and began to write.

When he had finished, he looked down at two pieces of parchment before him. He didn’t know what pleased him more – the beauty of his penmanship, or the cleverness of his plan.

One piece of parchment bore a gracious and humble, if not heartfelt, invitation to Egan, to attend a ceremony of blessing of the foundation of Cam’s new castle. The other piece was addressed to a more distant relation and for a far different purpose.

Cam’s cousin Alpin had a reputation as a man whose loyalty and morals could be bought, and for not especially handsome sums. Alpin’s invitation was a request to slay Egan directly after the ceremony, for the far-from-princely sum of three shillings (enclosed).

Cam called for his servant.

“Deliver these invitations,” he said. “This one goes to my dear cousin Egan. This one is for my cousin, Alpin. Make sure they receive them as soon as possible.”

The servant nodded, bowed and left. He hurried down the long staircase and out into the courtyard, heading for the stables. He was intent on his mission, hoping to curry favour with his master, and would have accomplished it without delay, had he not crossed paths with one of the housemaids, with whom he had been carrying on a lengthy courtship. Some time later, as he was actually swinging himself into the saddle of his horse, his thoughts were no more on the task at hand than they were of being the King of the Isles.

Just as the sun was touching the horizon, Alpin sat with a piece of parchment in his hand. He scratched his head and waved it at his wife.

“Here, what the devil does that puffed-up dandy want with me?” he asked.

“How should I know,” said his wife. “He’s your relation, not mine. But here’s an idea. Why don’t you open it and see?”

Alpin muttered something under his breath and stared for a moment at the parchment. Then he broke the seal. He peered at the flowing script, trying to decipher the meaning.

“Pah,” he said, finally. “Chance would be a fine thing.” He tossed the parchment on the fire and watched the flames suck greedily as the wax seal melted.

When Alpin told his wife what the message said, they both laughed heartily, then and anytime it was ever mentioned again.

Many miles away, Egan sat at his table, an annoyed expression on his face, a piece of parchment in his hand.

“What does that pompous fool want now?” he wondered as he broke the seal.

On the day before the ceremony of blessing, Cam was a bundle of nerves. He was worried that he’d heard nothing from either Alpin or Egan, but he was sure they’d be there. Alpin wasn’t likely to pass up the offer of a free meal, and Egan would never miss an opportunity to sneer and belittle Cam, especially before an audience.

Cam found himself wondering how Alpin might dispatch Egan. Surely, he wouldn’t be so foolish as to engage him in hand-to-hand combat. Egan wasn’t the best swordsman in the realm, but neither was Alpin. Besides, Alpin preferred hiding in dark corners or behind doors, slipping out to attack when his victim was least prepared. Cam didn’t really care how he went about it, as long as Egan was stone cold by the end of the day.

Cam was amusing himself imagining how shocked and horrified he could pretend to be

when news of Egan’s demise reached him. He could see himself widening his eyes, clasping his hands together, gasping in horror—a performance worthy of a passion play. Of course, Alpin would have to be disposed of, as well. Murderers must pay for their crimes, after all. Such were Cam’s thoughts, when his servant burst into his chamber.

“Begging your pardon, master, but one of the sentries just reported that there is a large company of armed soldiers approaching from the east.”

Cam sat bolt upright in his chair. The first thought that came to him was that some of his guests had misunderstood and had come to his present home, instead of to the site of his new one. And they were arriving prematurely. That would be inconvenient, of course, but not an insurmountable problem. But why would they be attended by a large company of soldiers? They weren’t invited!

Cam followed the servant out onto the battlements and looked east. By now, a small army of mounted horsemen were so near to the castle that he could almost discern the emblem on the pennant carried by the foremost rider. He felt an icy finger of fear slide down his back as he recognized the crest of his cousin, Egan.

“What’s he doing here a day early?” Cam asked no one in particular. “And why with so many men, armed to the teeth?” Cam was sure it did not bode well for him so it was with a great deal of concern that he watched their approach. As the horsemen started across the drawbridge, Cam caught a glimpse of the grim expression on his cousin’s face. Something was horribly amiss.

“Lower the portcullis!! Bar the gates! Let no one enter!” he shouted to his guards, and peered down at the soldiers gathering below him.

“Good day to you, cousin,” Cam called out to Egan, in a forced, jolly voice. “What do you mean by coming here, and so early? I’m not ready for you. And why have you come fitted out as for battle? This is to be a blessing ceremony, not a joust!”

Egan urged his horse forward and stared up at Cam, shading his eyes against the glare.

“Why, may not a cousin visit his kin without reason? We’ve a great deal to talk about, you and I.”

“Such as?”

“Such as what to do with a servant who cannot carry out as simple a task as the delivery of a message to the proper recipient.”

Cam swallowed. “I do not follow you, cousin.” His voice cracked and quavered as he spoke.

“Your pitiful little scheme to murder me would have been more effective if I hadn’t received the message intended for the assassin. Really, Cam. Are you so weak and

pathetic that you cannot do your own dirty work? Are you even a man? I suppose not, since you won't even face me, but instead cower behind stone walls, like a child. Now, open the damned gates and meet me."

The girl, chewing thoughtfully, looked at her father.

"Egan got Alpin's message and Alpin got Egan's?"

"That's right, Emmie."

"Did he keep the three shillings, do you think?"

Her father coughed, as a bit of sweet bun caught in his throat.

"I expect so," he said finally.

The girl nodded. "I would have, as well. What did Cam do then?"

Cam wiped his brow and took a deep breath. He forced a smile upon his face, that even from a distance did not appear convincing.

"Cousin, you do me wrong. I see my little jest has failed to amuse you. I mean you no harm. We're blood kin, after all."

"Then open the gates and let me in, so that I may greet you properly as blood kin."

Cam had no doubts as to how Egan planned to greet him and he had no wish to experience it. He turned to the guard at his side.

"You'd better let him in. He has enough men and weapons, no doubt, to force his way in. But take your time. Go down, open the gates but pretend to struggle with the portcullis. That'll give me the time I need."

"For what, sir?" the guard asked, but Cam had already gone.

Cam made his way down the steps, down a long dark hallway, into the kitchen. On another day he might have dawdled, enjoying the rich scents and the warmth of the ovens, but on this day his need was great and he'd no time. As soon as he entered the kitchen, everything stopped. Cam found himself surrounded by a dozen pairs of startled, wide eyes.

"Who is in charge here?" he asked.

"Where is Cook?"

"Here I am, my lord," said a voice just to his right. "What would his lordship require?"

Cam turned to see a woman of middle years, dressed in an immaculate apron and cap, standing at his elbow. She was not a great deal taller than his elbow either. She seemed not the least intimidated by Cam, but boldly met his gaze. He was, after all, in her domain now.

"I need...this, and this." Cam reached out to a hook on the back of the kitchen door. He took down an apron and a cloak, with which he quickly covered himself. Cam turned back to the cook.

"Do I look enough like a woman?" he asked her.

"Aye, a six-foot-tall woman with a beard. Here..." Cook tossed a dish cloth at him.

"Cover your face and stoop a little. Perhaps then, a man galloping by on a horse wouldn't notice."

Emmie giggled. Her father paused, smiling.

"Cam must have looked very silly, not like a woman at all," she said.

"No doubt," said her father, the smile fading from his lips. "But desperate men sometimes do foolish things. Then they regret them later."

Cam scurried through the kitchen, through the postern door, then into the kitchen garden. He clambered over the garden wall and then scurried into the woods behind the castle. There he hid, sometimes under bushes, sometimes behind them, and sometimes in a tree, for two days, all the time wishing he'd had the presence of mind to take some food from the kitchen before he had left. Instead, he had to live on what he could find—berries, mushrooms, nuts and so on.

On the third day, he had just come upon a large raspberry bush, when he heard the sound of approaching voices. Cam looked wildly about him for somewhere to hide. The raspberry bush was the only bit of greenery close enough to cover him, so he began to crawl under it. Unfortunately, his clothing snagged on the brambles and in a matter of moments, Cam was caught fast, the greater part of his body lying in plain sight. Cam cursed under his breath as he heard the sound of footsteps coming closer.

All of a sudden, the footsteps stopped. For a long moment, there was utter silence. Then came the sound of men's laughter, as they caught sight of a kilt and a pair of booted legs sticking out from beneath the raspberry bush.

"Well, well. What do we have here, do you think?" said one of the voices.

"Some strange sort of creature, to be sure. And it seems quite fond of raspberries."

"Do you think this is all of it?"

"There must be more of it. It has no head. Just a pair of legs and an arse. Not much of a creature, if you ask me."

Then a voice that Cam recognized—his cousin Egan's.

"If this is what I think it is, it's not much of a creature, in any case. Pull him out."

Cam felt rough hands grab him by the ankles, then drag him out from under the raspberry bush, scratching him badly. There he sat, muddied, grass-smearred, bloody and bedraggled. He looked up at Egan, searching for any signs of compassion on his cousin's face.

"Cousin," he said, making his voice sound as miserable and penitent as he could manage. "I throw myself on your mercy. I beg you, do not kill me."

Egan came to stand over Cam and glared down at him.

"Why should I show you any mercy? You planned to have me killed. Was it your hope to rule in my stead once I was gone? To take my lands and my riches, leaving my family with nothing?"

"No, no! I could never be so foolish as to think I could ever replace you, you who have been such a worthy chieftain. I only wanted revenge for your unkind words. Pity me, cousin. Pity my foolishness."

"The only reason I don't run you through with my sword as you sit there, as satisfying as that would be, is that killing you quick would be too light a fate. You're a treacherous, conniving fool," Egan snarled. "I need time to decide what to do with you, so you'll see another sunrise at least. Take him and put him in irons."

Cam, still dressed in his muddy tatters, sat on a small wooden stool in the corner of a cell. Grey stone walls surrounded him. Trickles of water made their way down the walls to sink into the damp earthen floor. High up in one of the walls was a small barred window. From the colour in the window, Cam could tell that it was morning. It only felt as though he'd been sitting there for ever.

He slowly, stiffly got to his feet and hobbled to the door of his cell.

"Hello?" he called. There was no reply but a faint echo returning to him off the stones. "Hello!" he called again, more loudly this time.

"Hold your tongue!" came a gruff voice from close at hand. Cam pressed his face against the small opening in the door, but he could not see the owner of the voice.

"Please," said Cam. "I am very hungry. May I not have some meat and drink?"

A guard came to stand before the door, a look of bored disgust on his face.

"I've no meat nor drink to give you. And no orders to, even if I did."

"But I'm so hungry. I've eaten nothing but raspberries and a few nuts since the night before last. Can you not hear my stomach rumbling?"

The guard grunted. "I suppose I can send to Lord Egan to see if you can be fed. In the meantime, keep quiet." The guard disappeared without another word. Cam felt so sorry for himself, and for his dismal future, that he sat himself down on his stool and began to weep great salty tears.

He was only a little less tearful when, sometime later, he heard the great door at the end of the passage swing open, then footsteps coming down the passageway. The aroma of hot meat reached Cam and saliva filled his mouth.

The door to his cell flew open and the guard entered, followed by three serving men. Two of them held between them a huge wooden platter, bearing a whole roast piglet. The other man held in his arms a small keg.

"Here," said the guard. "Lord Egan has ordered that none shall feed you except himself and as he will be away for several days, you must make it last until his lordship returns."

Cam was slaving by this time. His attention was so fixed on the pig and the keg that he scarcely heard the guard.

The serving men barely had time to lower their burdens before Cam was on them, tearing off great handfuls of the pig and stuffing them into his mouth. He didn't even notice when the guard and the serving men left. He ate and ate until his face was smeared with meat and grease and tears. He ate until his stomach ached. Then he ate until his stomach rebelled and he was sick in the corner of his cell by the chamber pot. For a moment he knelt on the floor of the cell, breathing heavily. He wiped his mouth and his eye fell upon the keg, resting on the floor.

Cam crawled over to the keg and hefted it in his arms. It was heavy, and completely full, judging by the lack of sloshing sounds. Cam didn't care if it held water or wine or ale. He was very thirsty, the meat had been overly salty and he needed something to wash away the taste of sick, still in his mouth.

Cam glanced about the cell. No one had thought to bring him a drinking vessel, anymore than they had brought him a knife to cut and eat the meat. He shrugged. He turned the spigot at the base of the keg as he lifted it to his lips.

Cam began to cough, splutter and spit as sand poured from the keg, into his mouth. He dropped the keg, and wiped his lips, still spitting out gobs of wet sand.

He shouted for the guard when his mouth was clear enough.

When the guard appeared, he was clearly not pleased at being disturbed.

"What's all this bother about? You wanted to be fed, so now you have been."

"The meat was so salty, and there was nothing but sand in the keg."

"Well, what do you want me to do about it?"

"Bring me something to drink! Wine or ale! Even water to quench my thirst!"

The guard snorted. "Who are you to be giving me orders? You're a prisoner, a would-be assassin of your chieftain. You've no sway here. It's more than my job's worth to bring you drink. I'd lose my position if Lord Egan thought I was going against orders."

"Then what am I to do?"

"Lie down, die and rot, for all I care. You wanted Lord Egan dead. You can't complain if he returns the favour."

As days passed, Cam became more and more desperate. He sought relief for his thirst from the tiny trickles of moisture that ran down the walls, but they weren't enough. The guards became used to hearing Cam moaning and wailing, weeping and cursing. When they heard him raving and howling like a dog, and speaking to someone they couldn't see, they looked at one another and crossed themselves. Then came the day when they heard nothing at all.

The little girl looked up at her father as he began to gather their belongings.

"Did Cam die, Dada?"

"Aye, but first he went mad from thirst. It would have been a kindness if the guard had lent him a dagger to cut his own throat. It would have been a quicker death."

"What happened to Egan?"

"My father said people were so dismayed by the way he treated Cam, that they rose up and killed him, as well. So, both of them died."

The girl looked thoughtful. "That is so sad, Dada. I wouldn't want to die like that, all hungry and thirsty and mad. I feel sorry for Cam," she said.

"Aye, that would be a terrible way to die. But don't you trouble yourself about it. Your mam and I are here to take care of you. You'll never want for food or drink." He began tucking the tea things into the pony's pack then lifted her up onto the pony.

"Not just that. Because his dada never told him what you told me that time."

"Why? What did I say?"

"When Millie across the way made fun of me and called me bad names. You said to tell her, 'Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.' If his dada had taught Cam that he wouldn't have minded what Egan said, and perhaps he wouldn't have died that way."

An idea seemed to come to the girl.

"You could say that to Iain MacGregor.

Then perhaps he'll feel sorry for calling you a bad name, like Millie did with me. Because now we are best friends again."

The man leant forward and kissed the girl on her forehead.

"It's not that simple, Emmie. Iain MacGregor and I are not children. We can't settle our differences with mere words. This is a serious matter and we'll likely have to settle it with arms."

Emmie struggled to free a hand from the confines of the blanket, and pulled it down below her chin.

"What will Mam and I do if you fight Iain MacGregor and you die?"

The man stood stroking the neck of the pony for a long moment, without speaking.

"I don't know, Emmie. I can only do my very best to make sure I don't."

"Does Iain MacGregor have a little girl like me? It would be sad if she had to grow up without her dada, as well."

"You're too young to understand these things, Emmie. It's a matter of family honour."

"I think I would rather have you and my mam than whatever that is."

The man met his daughter's eyes, then looked away quickly. He stepped away and walked off a few paces. For a long time, he stood motionless, staring out over the tumbled stones near the brink of the cliff, to the turbulent sea beyond them. His gaze dropped to the wind-blown turf beneath his feet, until finally he turned again to look at his only child, waiting patiently on her pony. He gave a great sigh, then strode back.

"We'd better get a move on," he said.

"Your auntie will be wondering where we've got to. And I've a great many things to think about. And tomorrow..." He paused, chewing on his lip like a starving man.

"I'm thinking we should go back home.

Your mam will be missing you and she always feels better when you're there to keep her company."

The man picked up the pony's lead and they started off again. The little girl looked out over the rocks, and frowned.

"Who is it that lives here now?" she asked.

"No one, love. All the people moved away after Egan had the walls of the castle pulled down. They say Cam's ghost haunts the ruins, but that's just talk for late at night."

The man shifted his plaid against the wind, which now had a threat of snow in it.

"Only a few more miles to go, little one, then it's a good supper and off to bed, for you."

As they picked their way along the track, the girl looked back over her shoulder. She turned to her father, a question on her lips, but hesitated. When she turned back again, there was nothing to be seen, but the long grass blowing in the salt wind off the sea.

This story by Helen E. Patterson was one of the entries in our first Chapbook Competition which we launched in 2021. Her story was inspired by an interview she heard with British author Neil Gaiman during which he made a brief reference to an ancient feud between rival clansmen Hugh and Donald MacDonald. On hearing this Helen was equally intrigued and horrified, and began to think, "What sort of men were they? How could they do such things to one another?" Finding no answers to these questions, she fell back on her imagination. "Sticks and Stones" is the result.

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