

Additions
to The Wandering Scots, The McMillans,
Volume III of The History of a Family: Birchards, McMillan and Rears, 2010

2/4/11: New information about a source of family names:

The following letter was discovered among some pictures that belonged to Edna Rear Manning, the author's mother, shortly after Volume III was published. The letter, from George McMillan (#1486) mentioned sending Edna Manning a list of names of his parents' descendants. Although such a list was not found with the letter, it must be the source for the information on pages 66 and 67 of A Genealogical Record of the Birchard-Burchard Family, McMillan Family, Rear Family, by Edna Manning Laughter and Edna Rear Manning, Salem, Oregon, 1962. Self-Published.

53 Oak Knoll Drive,
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
May 12, 1962

Dear Mrs. Manning:

Your cousins Frank McMillan of Wimbledon, N. D. and his sister, Mrs. Riggle, have declared you to be the genealogist of your branch of the Clan McMillan. The enclosed list of descendants of James McMillan and his wife, Elizabeth Burns, of Wigtonshire, Scotland, indicates that it is my privilege to be numbered among your mother's first cousins, she being a daughter of Thomas McM. and I a son of his older brother, David.

Before proceeding further with this matter I would extend to you the sympathy of my wife and myself in the recent loss of a sister with whom you have been long in close association. We know how sorely you will miss her, One can look forward to coming events in anticipation; but the past holds only memories. In your lovely memories of the past and in the recognition of your part well done you will find consolation to-day. One's body is part of the outer world which is subject to change and decay; but the inner life has its origin and its destiny in the spirit, the abode of freedom, and is not destined to die.

A few weeks ago I addressed a letter to the late T. E. McMillan of Wimbledon and in response received from his son, Frank, and from Mrs. Riggle, a vast amount of enlightenment respecting relatives about whom I knew nothing. They have given me a good account of Uncle Tom's descendants, with the exception of your mother and her offspring. I should be very appreciative of whatever information you may offer respecting the career of your mother and her descendants. The enclosed list of relatives contains an outline of the extent and the limitations of my acquaintance with the upper branches of our family tree. This list includes the names of my sisters and brothers only, nine of whom left families, about two of which my records are still incomplete. I still purpose honouring a pledge to send Frank a list of descendants of my parents, giving names, dates of births, marriages and deaths, occupations, names of wives or husbands and present addresses, as far as the information has come to me. The task of gathering and assembling data has been greater than I had supposed. To a typist, self-taught and prone to error, the list is a large one.

I was interested to learn a few days ago that my brothers, David and Sinclair, each on a separate occasion, visited briefly at the home of our cousin. T. E. McM. when he farmed near Holland Landing.

There is a marked difference between the limited facilities in the ancestral home in Wigtonshire and the resources at the command of so many of the descendants to-day, a change made possible by the economy, courage and endurance of members of a very few intervening generations. It is still more interesting to note that the high standard of moral excellence that prevailed in that early home has been maintained through succeeding generations.

I am not sure how this letter should be addressed, so I am addressing it, as directed by Frank, to Mrs. Manning alone. I hope that you may not regard this letter as in intrusion or a burdensome nuisance. My very best wishes attend you.

Yours Sincerely,

George McMillan