

## **From ‘King to convict’ and back again? Australian origins, the Murray mystery, and the re-emerging MacGregor legacy**

- Cameron Richards, Gold Coast, May 2020.

### **Introduction: Australian origins and the ‘Murray mystery’ (how the past can come ‘alive’ again)**

At the famous 1917 Royal Investiture in Hyde Park, London (the biggest since the Crimea War in 1857), it was an Australian not a British soldier who featured as the most ‘prominent recipient’ at this public event. The most decorated soldier in the British imperial forces in WW1 (and still today Australia’s most decorated soldier ever), the then Major (later Colonel) Harry Murray who had much earlier gone to Gallipoli as a private was presented with a VC and two DSOs by King George to go with his other medals. These later medals were for his exploits of leading his men from the front on the Western front – the basis for historian Charles Bean’s claim that Murray was “Australia’s most significant fighting officer”. The subsequent feting of Harry Murray by the press, the public and others at the time in the UK as well as later on his return to Australia included an invitation from the Duke of Atholl in Scotland (also the recognised chief of the Murray Clan) to come and visit Blair Atholl Castle – where a possible family connection was discussed [1]. Indeed, a number of the descendents of Kennedy Murray (Harry’s great grandfather) had long believed their ancestor was connected with the 3rd Duke of Atholl.

Fast forward to 2019 and the Channel 10 program *Who Do You Think You Are* episode involving *Doctor Doctor* star Roger Corser focused on the exemplary story of Corser’s ancestor Kennedy Murray [2]. It reported on how Kennedy had come to Australia in 1791 on the convict ship *The Pitt*. He was initially based in Toongabbie, Sydney, before being sent to Norfolk Island [3]. Here he later married and had a family with Anne White who came out on the earlier *Neptune* with the second fleet. After more adventures and a tragic second marriage (to Ann Parker) Murray ended up living at Evandale, Tasmania, the birthplace of his descendent Harry Murray – and the site of a statue in Harry’s honour opened by the Governor General in 2006 [3]. Here Kennedy spent his later years living with his first-born son of the same name who came good as a respectable citizen - appointed the local Chief Constable and who also built a Georgian mansion originally named Prosperous House [4]. And as an exemplary story of Australian origins also involving such an extensive local family tree right across the land, Kennedy Murray has been featured on ‘Australian Royalty’, a site focused on early colonial inhabitants in Australia through the filter of a Jack Thompson quip [5].

The unexpected directions of my investigation outlined below were inspired and motivated by two related links that I wished to explore. One is that my mother is a Murray with no known connection to my father’s Murray lineage – connected back to Kennedy Murray via the line of his grandson Edward Kennedy Murray. At the age of 18 just after WW2 (and after his own father died in 1943) my father Neil Richards was invited by his Uncle Harry Murray to come away from Launceston, Tasmania, and join him on a his sheep station Glenlyon at Richmond, North Queensland – where he spent the next fifty years as a next-door neighbour to as well as close cousin of Harry Murray and his immediate family. So, together with my mother’s sister Nya Murray (who had already made some breakthroughs with my mother’s Murray lineage), I was interested in whether or what link there might be between these two distinct Murray strands?

In relation to this first question I later found reference to how the Bothwell/Tullibardine/Atholl Murrays were linked back in the 12th Century to the Moray Murrays of North Scotland believed to have derived from William ‘De Moravia’ (‘Of Moray’ in Norman) – with the Sutherlands descended from William’s brother Hugh. In the mid 13<sup>th</sup> Century a noble descendent Sir Water Murray came South to marry a heiress and took possession of the famous Bothwell Castle [6] - in the process, starting a divergent Murray Clan line. His own descendent was ‘the Andrew Murray’ (the ‘senior’ partner of William Wallace or ‘Braveheart’ in the initial Wars of Scottish Independence) who was killed at the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297. Andrew’s son in turn was Sir Andrew Murray, 4th Lord of Bothwell, who married Robert the Bruce’s sister (as well as fighting alongside Bruce in the massive defeat of the English in the Battle of Halidon Hill in 1333. As well as the Abercairny and Scone Murrays at one time, their direct descendents were the Dukes of Atholl group who still represent the Murrays with the Clan base at Blair Atholl Castle today – as well as the famous Atholl Highlanders, also today the only legal private army in the whole of Europe [7].

And in light of how family historians seemed to have reached a dead end with Kennedy Murray’s lineage I was also interested in checking the genealogy for Kennedy Murray published on a mysterious website with the title “From King to Convict” [8] – a genealogy which made specific links back to not only the 3rd Duke of Atholl but beyond to Robert the Bruce and other Scottish royalty as well as nobility. I later found that the specific link made back to Kennedy’s grandfather is almost certainly false. Yet, ironically, we found confirmation that there have been several maternal links over the centuries between the two major MacGregor clan chief lines and the Tullibardine-Atholl Murrays – also the basis for at least two “Murray MacGregors” lines through the 173 years (1603-1795) of Proscription when the MacGregor name was ‘banned’ on pain of death.

As I further propose here on the basis of my investigations, part of the secret of the ‘Murray mystery’ (and also the ‘MacGregor re-emergence’) is that via the influential ‘nobility networks’ at the time, a direct line of Tullibardine-Atholl Murray clan chiefs developed a ‘special relationship’ that ultimately informed two related “MacGregor Murray” lines of ‘secret MacGregor’ clan chiefs. This was perhaps the basis for how the Murrays seem to have taken on particular responsibility for using their ‘influence’ to help to ensure the survival of the ‘secret MacGregor Clan chiefs’ (and perhaps ultimately the Clan itself) across the Proscription period and beyond.

The relevance of this became clear in terms of how, as I proceeded to find some new links back, I also found that this seemed to reinforce a shocking related discovery around 2016 made possible by very recent DNA analysis techniques (see below). This is that the estimated 40,000+ Australians that derive back to Kennedy Murray (including my own family) are actually all really ‘secret MacGregors’ – that is MacGregors who took on another family name as an alias after the clan name was banned. In a related 2017 *60 Minutes* program, Channel 9 reporter Charles Woolley did a special report on his similar recent discovery that he and his family were also really ‘secret MacGregors’ [9].

### **Investigating the ‘From king to convict’ claims and related Kennedy Murray mysteries**

In 2018 I accidentally stumbled across the ‘King to Convict’ website projecting a specific lineage for Kennedy Murray. Whereas other family historians had only ever generally established a link back to Kennedy’s father John Murray and his wife in Dundonald, the ‘King to convict’ site projected a grandfather William. On this site William Murray is identified as ,

Marquess of Tullabardine, and the son of James, the 2nd Duke of Atholl – and he was apparently married to a Catherine Nairn. I discovered that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Atholl indeed had a son William who was quite famous and fitted the time frame [10]. I also found a John Murray born to a William in a nearby town. William was the Jacobite General for Charles Stewart (i.e. ‘bonnie Prince Charlie’) whose plan to fight the battle of Culloden was ignored by the King - which many believe would have been successful and perhaps significantly changed modern British as well as Scottish history [e.g. 11]. As a result William died in the Tower of London and the Jacobite rebellions were extinguished. This signalled an end to the real power of Scottish clans from then on – and the start of mass exodus of many highland Scots to places like the US, Canada and Australia.

However, I soon realised that this William had never married, and that it was his cousin of the same name who had actually married a Catherine Nairn. She was a passionate Jacobite Catherine who the royalist Duke of Atholl blamed for converting all his own sons into rebels fighting for the Stuarts against the English [i.e. against English efforts to thwart the Catholic and Scottish Stuarts by installing the 52<sup>nd</sup> in line to the British throne a German who could not even speak English]. William’s younger brother only became the next Duke of Atholl instead of William after receiving a pardon after the earlier 1715 Jacobite uprising which both also fought in. But cousin William did not quite fit the relevant time frame. I then sought to follow another lead that Kennedy Murray was born in Dundonald – to perhaps a local ‘John Murray’ there? [Kennedy Murray family historians like my Uncle Joe Cocker, Launceston, were generally aware that Kennedy Murray was born in Dundonald, Scotland, but this had long been a dead-end to inquiries. This was one reason why some tended to believe the family ‘rumour’ of how Kennedy himself apparently used to boast to his good friend Painter John Glover during local Evandale drinking sessions that he was ‘related to the Duke of Atholl’].

In any case, accessing the Scotland People’s Records [SPR] database (which Nya had used to track down my mother’s Murrays connection to the Moray Murray lineage in the North), we started our own new search for Kennedy Murray. Almost immediately we came across the birth records of a Kennedy Murray born in Dundonald, South of Glasgow, on 24/8/1771 [SPR 590-10144 Dundonald] to a John Murray and a Catherine (Caulder/Calder) Murray. Soon afterwards we found a link also to a marriage between the same John and Catherine in Dundonald 24/8/1771 [SPR590-2048 Dundonald] – suggesting that Catherine was pregnant with Kennedy when she married John. Kennedy’s birth record mentioned that both John and Elizabeth had been “servants of the Countess of Eglinton” at Eglinton Castle, Kilwinning, just a few kilometres away. The colourful Countess of Eglinton [12] was the third wife of Alexander Montgomerie who outlived her husband by 50 years to become a famous patron of Scottish Arts and Literature – with Eglinton Castle famous in its heyday at that time. It’s in ruins today, but adjacent to the still very popular Eglinton Park tourist gardens [13].

From a clue that Elizabeth might have been derived from the well-known nearby Kennedy clan we found several linked records which seem to generally confirm this. In the adjacent town of Irvine within the right time frame a James Calder had married an Elizabeth Kennedy and lived in Irvine [SPR] and had at least three children baptised there mentioned on the Scotland People’s Records - Agnes Calder born in 1/12/1643 [SPR595-10120], James in 9/10/1743 [SPR595-10115], and William 23/3/1749 [SPR595-10129]. However, upon further searching we found there were other records indicating Elizabeth was an older child born to James Caulder and Elizabeth Kennedy on 30/1/1737 and lived to 11/11/1818 in Ayrshire [e.g.

familysearch.org Ref. KLJ2-HCG]. From our searches, it also seems that James Sr's possible older sister Margaret married David Kennedy in Irvine in 1726 [SPR595-308].

We then remembered that the Countess of Eglington was actually a Kennedy from the prominent (Dalriadic) Kennedy clan based nearby in Greenan Castle, Ayr. [Coincidentally or not the Kennedy's other main clan site at the time was at the traditional MacGregor heartland town of Lochaber]. It was common across Europe in those times for other family members to join well-to-do households and it seems that this may well have been how Elizabeth came into the Eglington household where she met John Murray on site – a member of a well-established Murray cluster in several nearby towns as we further note below. In sum, there seems little doubt that his mother's maternal line was the basis for how Kennedy Murray derived his unusual first name.

We have attached a map in the appendixes showing how the related Murrays clusters of Kilwinning and Dundonald in particular (and also adjacent Dalry and Irvine) were located in space in terms of about a 20 klm radius in a specific area of Scottish Ayrshire. And a comprehensive search of Murrays in the wider Ayrshire reinforced how there these clusters generally derived back in time from one Murray family source in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. The recent DNA-based discovery via a Kennedy Murray descendent in Australia that these clusters appear to be 'secret MacGregor' line is not surprising in retrospect (as will be further discussed below also). The related clusters helped frame a successful search back beyond the John Murray 'dead-end' experienced by some previous Kennedy Murray family history researchers. This in conjunction to how flexible strategies were needed to navigate the regular gaps or omissions in births, deaths and marriages (and also 'mis-spellings' and possible typographic errors) typical of rural Scotland especially at the time – in order to make the references that could be cross-referenced to verify a consistent male line of descent for Kennedy Murray's ancestors.

In this way we were able to ultimately provide convincing verification of the links back beyond Kennedy's father John Murray [Jr]. We subsequently found the birth records of a John Murray born 25/3/1746 in Irvine [SPR595-1021] to a John Murray [Sr] of the same name married to a Margaret Boyd. Further 'cross-referencing' reasonably confirmed that the father was the same John Murray born 14/3//1721 in nearby Kilwinning [SPR599-10246] to David Murray and Agnes Steele. We were also able to reasonably verify (especially in terms of how these were the only Murrays in the vicinity at that time) how David was baptised 19/4/1686 at nearby Dalry [SPR587-109] son to Hugh Murray.

Hugh and his wife Janet Gibson had two other sons as well as a daughter in the 1680s – a Hugh (Jr) baptised in 31/3/1689 [Kilwinning SPR599-1063], James baptised in 4/5/1693 [Irvine SPR595-1011] and Anne baptised 11/4/1697 [Kilwinning 599-1092]. Whether Hugh Sr was moving house every few years in the immediate area or there was some other perhaps 'work-related' reason for registering his children in the adjacent (Kilwinning/Dalry/Irvine) parishes, we don't know. The family line appears to have been reasonably well-to-do, with definitely some members working with some of the adjacent castles or 'Laird estates' in the area (e.g. the Stuart Castle at Dundonald) – with a suggestion that they may once have had links to the 'nobility networks' and thus not at the bottom rows of the 'feudal' chain. In any case, these movements are clearly replicated by the future emerging hubs of an original Murray (MacGregor) family in the area. But a Kilwinning epicentre was further indicated when we

located Hugh Sr's brother John Murray – who married an Isabel Boulton at Kilwinning on 29/11/1681 [SPR 599-10316].

We found one more connection back further in the area after starting to appreciate how varied the spelling of names was in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century rural Scottish records – another obstacle to negotiate with searches. Just as *Hugh (Murray)* was also spelt *Hew* and *Hough* as his wife *Janet (Gibson)* was also spelt *Jannet* and *Jonet* on the different records of their children, so too we found that the birth of his brother John was originally registered as '*Johne Morray*'. In this way we discovered that John and Hugh's father was another *John Murray* (although also spelt *Johne Morray* when this son's birth was registered baptised 12/3/1657, [Kilmarnock 597-1065]). We know this *Johne Morray* is the one and the same John Murray, father of also Janet baptised 28/4/1667 [Kilmarnock 597-10104], because it's the same wife and mother with slightly different spelling also – *Annabelle Wilsoun aka Anable Willson*. They had another son Robert baptised 30/12/1658 [Kilmarnock 597-1074]. This Robert married Elizabeth Kirkward 19/11/1693 [Kilwinning 599-10336].

So whilst all three sons and a daughter were born in Kilmarnock (which is only 6 klms or so from Dundonald and slightly further to Irvine and Kilwinning) they all seemed to have generally ended up at Kilwinning at some stage or another later on. This is addition to how the members of this early family unit (like many of the later Murrays in the area for the next 200 years at least and probably longer) at times moved to or between adjacent villages in the area such as Irvine and Dalry and later Dundonald. It appears that later some Murrays from this group returned to nearby Kilmarnock as well.

In the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century this same family were the only Murrays in the birth, marriages and death records for the area - so we can be reliably confident about this despite some omissions and variations in the spelling of their names. In other words, we know that the John Murray who this cluster (along with Kennedy Murray) can be traced back to was in this area at Kilmarnock at least around 1650. Could this John have been the son of another John (e.g. John Murray aka Gregor MacGregor aka the recently abdicated 12<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor) who moved to the area in, say, the late 1630s. Certainly the time frame fits very well. And we now know with reasonably certainty that they were 'secret MacGregors' forced to take an alias because of the Proscription – and an alias 'Murray' that was linked to a 'special relationship' involving the Tullibardine Murrays and the MacGregor Clan Chief/nobility lines. So, there is clearly more than just a possibility that the Ayrshire cluster may have been derived from the 12<sup>th</sup> chief of Clan Gregor. And if not then from Y DNA analysis linked to Kennedy Murray so far, it would have been some close relation at the very least.

In any case, given that we have been able to further confirm that the DNA evidence that Kennedy's ancestral line was really a 'Murray MacGregor' one, the mystery remains who, how and where this connection to the main MacGregor lines came from – and also whether it was 'forgotten' about in time or did some within this particular family line carry the secret? These are fascinating questions we tried to explore further, although realising that perhaps it will take further DNA analysis and cross-referencing to reveal the truth. Before that we need to provide some additional relevant context. This includes how we are confident we have found the 'clincher' to confirming a direct Kennedy Murray male lineage a long way back in Ayrshire.

### **How the ‘clincher’ confirming this direct Kenney Murray male lineage in Scottish Ayrshire was also the answer to another KM ‘mystery’**

We later found a ‘clinching’ cross-reference which reasonably verifies claims that a consistent Kenney Murray male lineage can be found back to around the mid-17<sup>th</sup> Century in Ayrshire. This came whilst we were following up on a related KM mystery. Kennedy Murray came to Australia as a convict in 1791. This was after he was initially caught as a 14 year old robbing an Edinburgh shop one night in 1785 with some other boys of the same age. But he then was caught a few months later selling some trinkets in a Glasgow market which were found to have been stolen from the hotel room of a visiting salesman. Despite his young age, this second offense had Kennedy ear-marked to be sentenced by the courts at the time to be possibly hung as a ‘habitual criminal’. However, it was known within the family that some other family member at the time had exercised both apparent wealth and influence to ‘save’ Kennedy. Someone posted expensive bail for Kennedy. And they then paid for a solicitor at the time to write a Petition to have Kennedy ‘banished’ as a convict to the colonies rather than be hung. My Uncle Joe Cocker (the Tasmanian family historian for the Kennedy Murray and related lines) believed this to be possible evidence of a link to the Atholl Murrays.

Another version came from the Sydney Murray family linked back to a son (James) from Kennedy’s second marriage to Anne Parker (James Murray) - a side of the family that they had helped develop a comprehensive family tree to integrate with the Anne White side. It was Rob Murray (as one of a handful of direct male descendents of Kennedy) whose DNA analysis proved that Kennedy was a ‘secret MacGregor’ not a Murray. In addition to new information they had researched in relation to both Kennedy’s days in Sydney and his 1786 trial in Glasgow, Rob and his family historian sisters Jeanette and Cheryl had found documented evidence that an ‘Uncle Alex Murray’ had paid for both the bailing of Kennedy at his Glasgow trial and his successful Petition for banishment to the colonies instead of a possible hanging.

They speculated that this Alexander may be a close relative not of the Duke of Atholl but rather of the 18<sup>th</sup> Clan Chief of Clan Gregor Sir John MacGregor Murray after the end of the MacGregor Proscription in 1774. In that year Sir John, a Colonial in the British East India Service, also became the 1<sup>st</sup> Baronet MacGregor of Lanrick and Balquhider – the first of a new “McCarnaig” Clan Gregor Chief lineage that has continued down to today with the current Chief Malcom MacGregor. Ironically (but not coincidentally, as we discuss further below) MacGregor was a very close associate of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Atholl (i.e. the Murray Clan chief at the time). This was even before his son Evan married the Duke’s daughter – reinforcing maternal links (as well as ‘nobility network’ alliances) between the MacGregors and Murrays which, as we will see, go back several centuries.

By the time I had come across this last speculation, I had become proficient in navigating online adaptations of the generally reliable Scottish Peerage records that derive not just from Robert Douglas’s comprehensive 1764 volumes (and later updates of this) but also George Crawford’s earlier 1710 version. I could not find an Alexander Murray that directly linked to either the Murray MacGregors or the Atholl Murrays as well as the right time frame. Whilst he could have been one of many extended relations, I did a search for Alexander Murrays in the Ayrshire region. And ‘bingo’ - I was immediately able to identify an Alexander Murray from Dundonald

who had married Mary Dean in Dundonald on 11/3/1783 [SPR590-2063] - and was exactly the right age to have been an uncle to Kennedy (and a brother to John).

As well as a son to Alexander born in Dundonald 11/7/1792 [SPR590-10199] I was also able to find evidence that both his father and grandfather were a line of Alexander Murrays in the local area linked back to David Murray and Agnes Steel. The Alexander Murray born to David and Agnes in Kilwinning in 29/6/1729 [SPR599-2011] was thus the brother of John Sr and Uncle of John Jr. And this Alexander's [Sr] his own son Alexander [Jr] was therefore Kennedy Murray's "Uncle" from the same town. It seem pretty clear, then, that this was the "Alex Murray" whose name is on the document which Bailed Kennedy in 1786 after the payment of an expensive surety [14] – and who organised the solicitor who wrote the successful Petition to banish Kennedy as a convict to the Colonies (to save him from the real risk of being hung as a 'habitual thief' after being caught a second time). These verifiable links also apparently confirm that both of David Murray's sons John and Alexander had related male lineages of children and grandchildren (and also great grandchildren) taking their first names in the same immediate area that linked the Kilwinning and Dundonald Murray (MacGregor) clusters.

This brings us back to the central Murray MacGregor mystery. When my distant cousin via Kennedy Murray (Rob Murray from Sydney) undertook a male lineage DNA test to identify his Murray clan links as part of the Scottish DNA project, he was told he was not a Murray but a 'secret MacGregor' [15]. He was then told that he should contact the MacGregor DNA Project [16]. When he did this, Rob's dominant haplogroup listing and related DNA analysis was matched up with the current MacGregor clan chief (a descendent of John Murray MacGregor and his Glencairnig line). It was a definite and convincing 'close match' – so much so that Kennedy Murray is now listed on the MacGregor Clan DNA Project database. I had stumbled on mention of the 'hidden MacGregor' implications of Rob's test mentioned on a Kennedy Murray family tree summary published to the Web [17].

The MacGregor DNA Project is part of the wider Scottish DNA Project initiated by a pioneer of DNA genealogical analysis Bryan Sykes [e.g. 18]. The evidence for this was further disseminated in the Alistair Moffat books which reinforced how a combination of particular Celtic (especially Gaelic and Pictish) influences and the physical demands of raising cattle and roaming in the Western highlands of Argyll bred a fit and hardy as well as independent and proud type of people exemplified by the MacGregors. This might be compared (in the Middle Ages at least) with the often more sedentary and settled communities of the East and South dominated by farming framed by more feudal structures – as well as perhaps 'stronger' Norse and Norman influences [19]. As the author of *Scottish Highlanders* Charles MacKinnon (1992, p.29) put it:

*“They [the Highlanders] were a hardy, active and warlike people -- of this there is no possible doubt. Everybody who has left early evidence testifies to it, and not [always] in flattering terms. Such people need to be well nourished, and the Highlanders were always great meat eaters. They bred cattle in their glens, and their woods were full of game that they loved to hunt. At a time when the Lowlander of central Scotland was little better than a serf, tyrannized by greedy bonnet lairds [landed proprietors], and lived mainly off brose and oatmeal, the Highlander was well fed”.*

Clan Gregor is one of seven Scottish highland clans (along with the Grants, MacAulays, MacKinnons and others) claiming descent from Alpin, father of Kenneth MacAlpin

(traditionally the first King of the Scots circa 843). This connection was particularly strong for the emerging Gregor-cum-Grant tribal group in the Argyll area who were generally known as the MacAlpin ‘clan’ until the early 14<sup>th</sup> Century. This was also after a traditional ancestor of the MacGregors, Finghuin the Abbot of Glen Dochard, is believed to have got Papal authority in 966 for him to marry – the basis for a group in this area to emerge as ‘the Gregors’. The first Chief of Clan Gregor around 1350 was known Grigor of the Golden Bridles around 1350. Until the 12<sup>th</sup> Century (when family names, male lineages and thus the Scottish ‘clans’ started to also become the norm for highland clans, the MacAlpines-cum-Gregors had like other clans linked back to the Gaels and Picts traditionally combined maternal and paternal lineage. This group was also traditionally focused around the Glenorchy area of the Argyll.

But even before Clan Gregor formally came into being, Robert the Bruce had given away this central MacGregor heartland to the Campbells (as we discuss further below) - as they did other lands traditionally belonging to other Argyll clans such as the MacDonalds. As the MacDonalds also became well aware (e.g. 20), for the next centuries a clan derived more from ‘the British’ thus were not just given more and more lands of the (more) Gaelic and Pictish Celtic highland clans like the MacGregors. They were also effectively the ‘hereditary sheriffs’ in the Western highlands for Edinburgh and royalist forces that through the centuries were typically disposed more often than not to try and crush the ‘independence’ of the traditional highland Scots (and perhaps at times also the independence of Scotland more widely?).

But in relation to our developing Kennedy Murray (MacGregor) origins, where was the link back to the MacGregors exactly? Also, during our related inquires, we were able to identify two “Murray MacGregor” lines of MacGregor Clan chiefs after the 1604 Proscription. Both lines were not only also connected to the Atholl Murrays in terms of maternal lineage - but also in terms of what might be called the verifiable ‘nobility network’ bond between the Tullibardine-Atholl Murrays and the MacGregor Clan chiefs. As Scottish Clan Chiefs became Peers alongside feudal Scottish ‘Lairds’ over the centuries they developed an autonomous ‘kinship system’ of sorts through intermarriage and class relations that, whilst overlapping with the family and tribal networks of diverse Clans, was arguably also quite independent of these also. And the historical and genealogical records for these links were also far more extensive and reliable than the rural Parish records.

### **The link between the Kennedy Murray ancestral lineage and the ‘re-emerging’ MacGregor legacy**

Our initial working hypothesis for how the Kennedy Murray male ancestry first became a line of verified ‘Murray MacGregors’ was a shocking possibility. This was that the first Clan Gregor chief after the Proscription Act of 1603 may well have been the mysterious ‘secret MacGregor’ grandfather (or even father) of Hugh and David Murray - the apparent ancestors of a direct male lineage in the Kilwinning-Dundonald clusters of a small area of Ayrshire, Scotland. This is not just the proposed direct male lineage of Kennedy Murray – but also of the 40,000 Australians or so who link back to Kennedy (and the handful of Murray direct male descendents still alive today like Rob Murray from Sydney). We are talking about the 8<sup>th</sup> Clan Gregor chief Gregor MacGregor who took the name John Murray soon after the Proscription.

This John Murray (MacGregor) was a son of the 10<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor (Gregor MacGregor), Iain “Dubh Nan Luirraig” MacGregor who died in the 1603 Battle of Glen Fruin - a part of the MacGregor leadership group under Iain’s uncle the 11<sup>th</sup> Chief Alasdair Ruadh.



The Battle of Glen Fruin was the pretext for the Proscription that year against the use of the name MacGregor under penalty of death. The Campbells and others were actively seeking to hunt down and destroy (i.e. kill) the MacGregor clan leadership - the Glenstae and Glenloch/Lochaber MacGregors in particular. Iain MacGregor's three young sons were under serious threat. However, their mother was Elizabeth Murray from the powerful Tullarbardine-Atholl Murrays (i.e. the line of the Murray Clan chiefs until the present day). The Murray Clan leadership took in and protected Elizabeth and sons. So, with the subsequent appointment of Elizabeth's eldest son Gregor as the 12<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor, the Murrays effectively (and also knowingly) were protecting the future MacGregor clan leadership position (and also prospective future Peerage links). The three sons all took on the name of Murray as 'secret MacGregors'. As we discuss below, we believe that this 'special relationship' survived until well after the Proscription ended 172 years later when the 3rd Duke of Atholl also had a particularly close relationship with Sir John MacGregor Murray, the first of the modern (Glencairnig) line of MacGregor Clan chiefs.

The background to and subsequent fall-out from the events of the Battle of Glen Fruin (and why all MacGregors at the time took other names just to survive for the next 170 or so years were graphically recounted in Nigel Tranter's popular 1992 book *Children of the Mist*. However, this was arguably the final chapter in a process going back to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century when Robert the Bruce gave away much of the Argyll lands of the MacGregors (and other related western highland clans) to the Campbells. The pretext for this was a Peerage deal to reward the Campbells as a political ally. But also it is thought that despite the MacGregors also fighting for him as they had with William Wallace a few years earlier, that Robert the Bruce was also perhaps influenced by John MacGregor of Glenorchy agreeing to serve Edward I in France after being captured at the Battle of Dunbar. And as many of the MacGregor families were forced out of Argyll they also started to set up residence in parts of Stirling (such as Balquhiddy) and the Breadalbane (including Perthshire) areas of mid-Scotland (such as Roro and Glenlyon). And as well as their Breadalbane later centre Blair Atholl the Murrays would have regularly run into MacGregors and 'secret MacGregors' in Perthshire especially.

As this pattern of MacGregor disenfranchisement of lands as well as influence by the Campbells with their influential connections to royalty continued over the next centuries, things came to a head in the mid 15<sup>th</sup> Century and then again in the early 16<sup>th</sup> Century. In 1432 the Campbells took over the MacGregor centre of Glenorchy and then killed Patrick of Glenstrae (the 5<sup>th</sup> Chief) in 1461 - and in 1488 Campbell Lords were given a royal permit to 'exterminate' any 'displace MacGregors' from Argyll lands. Prevented from becoming the 7<sup>th</sup> Chief by Campbells further asserting influence, legendary Chieftan of the 'Children of the Mist' line Duncan from the Ardchoille led the Gregarach in the quest to reclaim lands and revitalise the Clan. This was perhaps because of and not just despite how the Campbells influenced the choice of Clan Chieftan at that time to promote their own influence. Duncan soon became designated an outlaw providing the Glenorchy Campbells with an excuse to capture and execute him and his son in 1552. And then after the Campbells appropriated the last of the MacGregor lands in 1560 Gregor Roy MacGregor of Glenstrae also waged war against the Campbells for ten years to reclaim these before he too was caught and executed by them.

Gregor's son Alistair (2 years old when his father was also executed by the Campbells) became the 11<sup>th</sup> Chieftan of Clan Gregor and was influenced to marry a Campbell. Nonetheless he and

the Clan were still effectively set up for an unavoidable ambush by the Campbells in cahoots with others including the Colquhouns - who received a royal commission to suppress the MacGregors. It was after they murdered two MacGregors that Alistair led his Clan into battle with the Colquhouns. Although heavily outnumbered but with strategic advantage the MacGregors prevailed killing over two hundred Colquhoun fighters. And, so, in April 1603 James VI of Scotland was influenced to make the Proclamation against the MacGregors – and also executing Alistair and eleven other senior MacGregors in 1604. Subsequently many of the Gregorach (Clan Gregor) were literally hunted down and killed (and their wives and children branded, whipped and abused in other ways). It is well known fact not legend that “Black’ Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy had an execution pit in his Filairg Castle to entertain guests in his adjacent Great Hall – a site where MacGregors were shackled and then beheaded. The ‘Beheading Pit’ still exists today alongside the ruins of the castle and is a sombre for visitors [21].

It was in the wake of all this that Gregor (AKA John Murray), the 12<sup>th</sup> Chieftan, literally was fortunate to survive as a ‘secret MacGregor’. However, it was only after 1626 when he agreed to sell the Campbells the MacGregor’s Glenrae property that the Campbells eased off their campaigns – especially against the MacGregor leadership lines. We believe that it was the influence of other Peers like the Murrays using their ‘nobility kinship system’ networks of intermarriage that prevailed. Related to this is also how, like decades earlier, the Campbells and MacGregors often married within the framework allowed by Campbell Clan leadership to reinforce the status quo. But in 1636 both Gregor and brother Patrick Roy were nonetheless arrested by the King for being ‘secret MacGregors’ and imprisoned in Edinburgh for over a year. They may have been initially earmarked for execution like their father and other close relations. But after a year or so they were both released (again perhaps because of the Peerage network influence). Meanwhile a third brother Evan had disappeared overseas and was last heard of as an officer in the King of Sweden’s army.

At this point there arises a related mystery which might be linked to the appearance of the MacGregor Murray cluster in Ayrshire that produced Kennedy Murry and his Australian lineage. Soon after his release from custody, John (MacGregor) Murray ‘abdicated’ and handed over the Clan Chieftan position to his brother and was never heard from again. There was not only no further record of him (in relation to his death or whether he had children, etc) but nor also his wife Margaret Sinclair. We know she was well-connected as she had a brief earlier marriage to a Peer John Grant 3<sup>rd</sup> of Carron (Grants of course being closely related to the MacGregors way back) before he was murdered and John married her soon after. It seems that the records about both John and Margaret were wilfully suppressed and that they may well have had children. Because of how they mysteriously disappeared as a couple, we suspect that John’s abdication and subsequent ‘disappearance’ with his wife was a planned escape from the politics of Proscription that was perhaps abetted by close ‘nobility relations’ that may involved the Murrays, Stirlings and/or other ‘secret MacGregors’. If John and Elizabeth had made it to Ayrshire (a logical place to hide in Scotland for a ‘secret MacGregor’ away from the highlands and also both Perthshire and Edinburgh) then there is the right time frame for them in theory to be possible grandparents of the ‘MacGregor Murrays’ that emerged as at the Killwinning-Dundonald (etc) local clusters.

And why might Patrick have been relatively safe to take over the Clan Chieftan role? His wife was Jean daughter of Sir Robert Campbell of Glenorchy (enough said)! Patrick is known to

have continued the Murray name as a secret MacGregor until 1649 the year he died. At that time his son James became the 14<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor and kept the position as also a MacGregor Murray until 1678. James apparently reverted to the MacGregor name after 1661 when An Act of Parliament temporarily rescinded the Proscription ban against the name MacGregor (the Proscription was reinstated in 1791). Evidence of how other Clan chiefs and Peers also assisted the MacGregors is exemplified by the 1671 connection to the Chief of the MacKinnons – another Siol Alpin ‘cousin’ clan. James did not have any sons and a close relative ‘Tutor of Glenstrae’ Gregor MacGregor took on the position also dying childless in 1693 – the same year the Proscription was revived by King William III. Another Glenstrae relative Archibald MacGregor became the 16th Chief of Clan Gregor at that time. Rather than Murray he took on the name of Graham of Kilmanan as his ‘secret MacGregor’ alias.

Unlike the local rural and urban records (still ad hoc and irregular at this time), the Peerage records were actually generally reliable. This is perhaps because the Scottish Peerage networks were often interchangeable with yet distinct from the Clan leaderships and feudal lords. This was often one and the same in time, and the Peerage title for a local site sometimes overtook family name (e.g. Duke of Atholl for the head of the Murray Clan) and/or became disconnected from Clan origins in the case of many ‘Lairds’ (or Scottish feudal lords). In 1716 James Crawford produced a comprehensive book title “*The Peerage of Scotland, containing an Historical and Genealogical Account of the Nobility of that Kingdom* – and it was reasonably accurate and a basis for later studies by others such as Robert Douglas. The online Scottish Peerage sites we consulted below included [thepeerage.com](http://thepeerage.com) and [clanmacfarlanegenealogy.info/](http://clanmacfarlanegenealogy.info/).

How the Scottish “Peers” (or nobility) often included but were generally autonomous to the Clan chiefs through the centuries also needs to be carefully negotiated and better understood – especially in terms of how Clan ‘houses’ (e.g. within the MacGregors) like the Peer positions were often named in terms of local sites or villages and typically awarded also to feudal ‘lairds’. Mention of Clan families and Peerages dying out or being ‘extinguished’ was often confusing or inaccurate. For instance, Sir Walter Murray became the first Murray Lord of Bothwell – yet when his descendent died of the plague in about 1360 his wife remarried so that the position was taken over by the Douglasses. But the group of Bothwell Murrays did not die out and soon resurfaced in Perthshire at Scone, Tullibardine and later Atholl.

Some of the apparent ‘extinctions’ of MacGregor ‘houses’ and also ‘chieftan’ lines also involved related families moving to other sites. For instance, the Ladasach (Glenstrae) MacGregor line is often said to have been ‘extinguished’ in 1710 – but, as researcher Sheila MacGregor has pointed out, there were descendents around but they were not considered in the 1710 election. Conversely, soon after a Murray married a Stewart heiress to the position of Earl of Atholl, King Charles upgraded his descendent to the highest position Peerage position ‘Duke’ for ‘services rendered’. This was also the same process by which the Campbells were rewarded for services rendered to Robert the Bruce (and later royalty also) with titles as well as lands – the basis, for example, how the later Campbell Earls of Argyll displaced the MacGregor Laird of Glenorchy in 1435.

**The second ‘MacGregor Murray’ lineage as a possible explanation for the related mystery of how Kennedy Murray has now been verified as a “reasonably close match” to the current Clan Gregor chief?**

But there was also another Murray MacGregor line that is generally forgotten about today as well. It is a lineage which revolves forwards and backs in MacGregor history as well as ancestral lines from Sir John MacGregor Murray, the elected 20<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor – whose Glencairnig (Glencarnoch) MacGregor line has continued with subsequent Clan chieftans down to the present day with Major Sir Malcom MacGregor, 7<sup>th</sup> Baronet of Lanrick and Balquihidder. It is the current Clan Chieftan who has so far been definitely matched by DNA analysis with a direct Australian male descendent of Kennedy Murray. Given that there is strong evidence supporting the Ayrshire (MacGregor) Murray line back to possibly around 1650 this raises interesting questions about how or when this “secret MacGregor” link to the name Murray might have happened – and also just how accurate are the DNA Y tests? As outlined below, this MacGregor Murray line dates back to the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century – but could there have been earlier connections to the Ayrshire group? Or did this somehow link up to perhaps a latter MacGregor Murray in this line?

Just as John (MacGregor) Murray the 12<sup>th</sup> Chief had close relations with the Tullarbardine-Atholl Murrays – so too did John MacGregor Murray whose daughter married the son of the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Atholl. Writing before Y-DNA analysis for male genealogy could be cross-referenced, the comments of one Clan Gregor researcher who vaguely tried to cast doubts on the Glencairnig line and the “Murray MacGregor” part of this in particular (Sheila McGregor [22]) inadvertently added weight to new perspective on the MacGregor-Murray clan chief links. She criticised 20<sup>th</sup> Chief John MacGregor Murray for being so close to the Duke that he kept Murray as his main family name whilst openly acknowledging his MacGregor lineage after the Proscription was lifted in 1774 - and also after he was elected the new Clan chief in 1775. His son Evan John Murray MacGregor, of course, married Lady Elizabeth Murray (the Duke’s daughter). Succeeding his father in 1822 Evan’s name change back to MacGregor was approved by Royal License that year. And Evan’s own son Sir John Atholl MacGregor also kept the Atholl Murray link. But he was the last of the Gregor Clan Chiefs to keep any explicit Murray MacGregor connection – although we are aware that there remain Murray MacGregor traditions in families especially from Perthshire that could. One of these was Amelia Murray MacGregor whose book *The History of the Clan Gregor* was first published in 1898.

But we suspect there is a deeper explanation for a ‘special relationship’ that goes back to the 1603 protection to the two young Glenrae clan chiefs of the future. Sheila McGregor herself undermines her own argument somewhat by also mentioning the preferential treatment given to the MacGregors by an earlier Duke of Atholl in 1721 – which supports the idea that the special relation in the early 17<sup>th</sup> Century continued to the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century and the obvious devotion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Clan Gregor chief to the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Atholl in particular but the Murrays in general.

This McCairnig MacGregor line derives back from one of the most famous of all MacGregor warrior-leaders – Duncan MacGregor of Ardchoille who, along with his two sons, was executed by the Campbells in 1552. He was the first Chieftan of the ‘Children of the Mist’ line with Clan Gregor and would have or should have been the Clan Gregor chief at the time except for Campbell influencing (many of the Gregarach still believe). And he certainly led the

MacGregor resistance to the Campbells ‘war’ on the MacGregors, and was apparently responsible also for the MacGregors “Ardchoille war cry” [23].

We can briefly trace those in this line who used Murray as their ‘secret MacGregor’ name. Sir John’s father was an ‘Evan MacGregor’ known as Evan Murray (1715-1778). Evan was the brother of Duncan “MacGregor Murray, 3<sup>rd</sup> of Glencarnoch. He was also a professional soldier. As well as becoming a Jacobite Major by 1745, he was also the Aide de Camp to Bonnie Prince Charlie at that time of the 1745 uprising and the Battle of Culloden. He was later an officer in the 88<sup>th</sup> Highlanders. Evan’s own father was also a John (MacGregor) Murray. He is remembered in particular for his quarrel with Rob Roy MacGregor in 1722. He took the alias or ‘secret MacGregor’ name Murray after the MacGregor Proscription was re-imposed in 1793 – and was also married to a Campbell. We wonder whether he took the name Murray because of the earlier link between the earlier MacGregor Murrays and the Tullarbardine-Atholl and the special protection that was provided. There is a connection that could help explain this. John’s grandfather Patrick ‘Aberach’ MacGregor apparently had quite a lot to do with the John (MacGregor) Murray, 12<sup>th</sup> Chieftan of Clan Gregor, who in 1628-29 organised a MacGregor reconciliation with the Buchanans.

We earlier mentioned the common highland and also Celtic warrior traditions of both the Murrays and MacGregors ancestral lines – comparing the Pictish origins of the Moray Murrays from the North with the MacGregor’s exemplary Dalreadic, Gaelic and ‘Siol Alpin’ origins as a particularly hardy and fierce group from the Western highlands. These MacGregors were one of the first Clans to use their ‘great kilts’ (which later evolved into the modern walking kilts) in their pastoral, fighting, and other activities, and were also amongst the first Scottish clans to embrace the use of bagpipes for both ceremony and war (i.e. and indeed highland bagpipes were classified by the Royalist forces as ‘instruments of war’ during the Jacobite rebellions).

As indicated above, both the Murrays and MacGregors (including their ‘secret MacGregor’ aliases) were typically at the centre of things in the fight for Scottish as well as highland independence over the last 1000 years or so. It should be no surprise that in modern era they also figured strongly in the Jacobite rebellions up to the 1745 battle of Culloden against English/Royalist forces – yet also were clan lineages also prominent in the highlander regiments of the British Armies over the last few hundred years both as professional soldiers and military leaders. In other words, despite the treatment (or even the betrayal on occasions) of the MacGregors by Robert the Bruce and also later leaders often based in Edinburgh or with some English/Royalist sympathy or complicity, they (like the Murrays and others) exemplify a particular Highland hardiness and independence that perhaps many Scots might identify as their ‘heartland’? Perhaps one difference in that time is perhaps how the Atholl Murray clan chiefs became pre-eminent in the Scottish Peerage networks (i.e. independently of the Clan) whereas until more recently the Chief of Clan Gregor’s main role has perhaps been to represent the Clan rather than a particular Peerage per se.

The fact that many highland clans remained independent, mobile and even ‘fierce’ up until the Battle of Culloden (or even earlier when the highland pastoralists and fighting clansmen moved South or East to more sedentary locales like Ayrshire) reinforces how genealogical searches back in time in Scotland need a combination of methods and an ‘adaptive strategy’ to be more effective. At least “three confirmations” of identify may be relevant to historical figures (or members of the nobility networks) as Sheila MacGregor insists. But because of the omissions,

misspellings and inconsistent records of many rural and also urban areas of Scotland – even after records first started to be kept in the early 17<sup>th</sup> Century in many areas and up to the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, this is often not possible with Parish birth, death and relationship (as distinct from marriage) records. But, as we have seen, sufficient or reasonable basis for tracing genealogy can still be established despite the gaps. And if and when this dovetails with Peerage records (especially those involving significant Clan leaders and their relations) then this can also really complement the breakthrough implications of especially the Y DNA male ancestry analysis.

In sum, current DNA research investigations confirm that Kennedy Murray was really a ‘secret MacGregor’ – and also that apparently he is linked most closely to this second (i.e. the Glencairnig) MacGregor Murray line. If we are right that Kennedy’s MacGregor Murray lineage dates back to around 1650 in a particular Ayrshire cluster, then given that the second line arguably started around fifty years later three possibly scenarios might explain the connection found: One, an earlier Glencairnig MacGregor took on the name Murray and moved to Ayrshire; second, a Glenstrae Murray (possibly John MacGregor Murray, the 12<sup>th</sup> Chief, and his wife) ‘disappeared’ there with the support of the nobility network, and a third alternative explanation could also lie in some earlier common link between the Glencairnig/ Ardchoille and Glenstrae/Ladasach MacGregors. More sophisticated YDNA analysis methods applied to more ‘secret MacGregor’ lines should help to explain the link. In any case, the result may well be some very significant and even explosive rewiring of not only MacGregor history but perhaps Scottish history more widely.

## **Conclusion**

Well-known to be a generally modest man yet also a fierce ‘warrior’ himself and a lifetime pastoralist at home in a rural rather than urban setting, Harry Murray might have been even more impressed to find out that he descended from the MacGregors rather than from the Duke of Atholl [24]. There are perhaps around 40,000 or so other Australians who have descended from the Kennedy Murray who came to Australia as a young teenage convict in 1791. Most of those who have some awareness of their ancestral connection to Kennedy really have little or no knowledge about his Scottish ancestry – and are generally not aware that they are really ‘secret MacGregors’ not Murrays (as well as various other genealogical connections).

What began as an investigation really to try and link up the different Murray ancestries of my mother and father really turned into a much interesting inquiry – requiring also a crash-course in Scottish history and also geography as well, in addition, the genealogical lines of two exemplary highland Clans the MacGregors and the Murrays. It is an overlapping story (I was still pleased to see at least a matrilineal link back to the Atholl Murrays that I am now certain can also be established). And hopefully our provisional findings may help interest younger generation relatives in what is a still-evolving mystery with some steps to go. It may also assist the wider MacGregor Project to link both MacGregor and ‘secret MacGregor’ descendents today to some very fascinating currents in (and stories about) Scottish, British and indeed global as well as Australian history.

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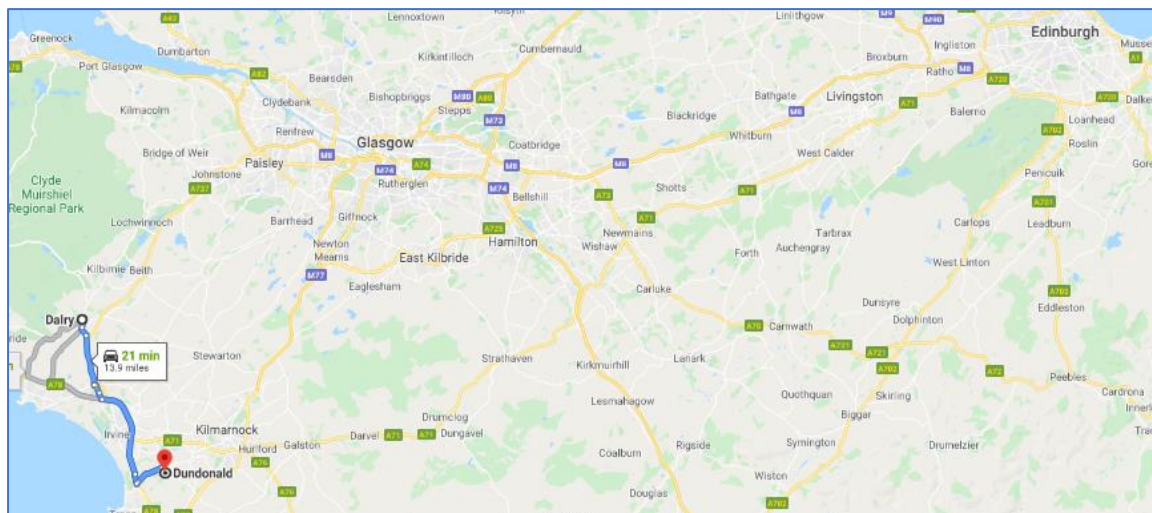
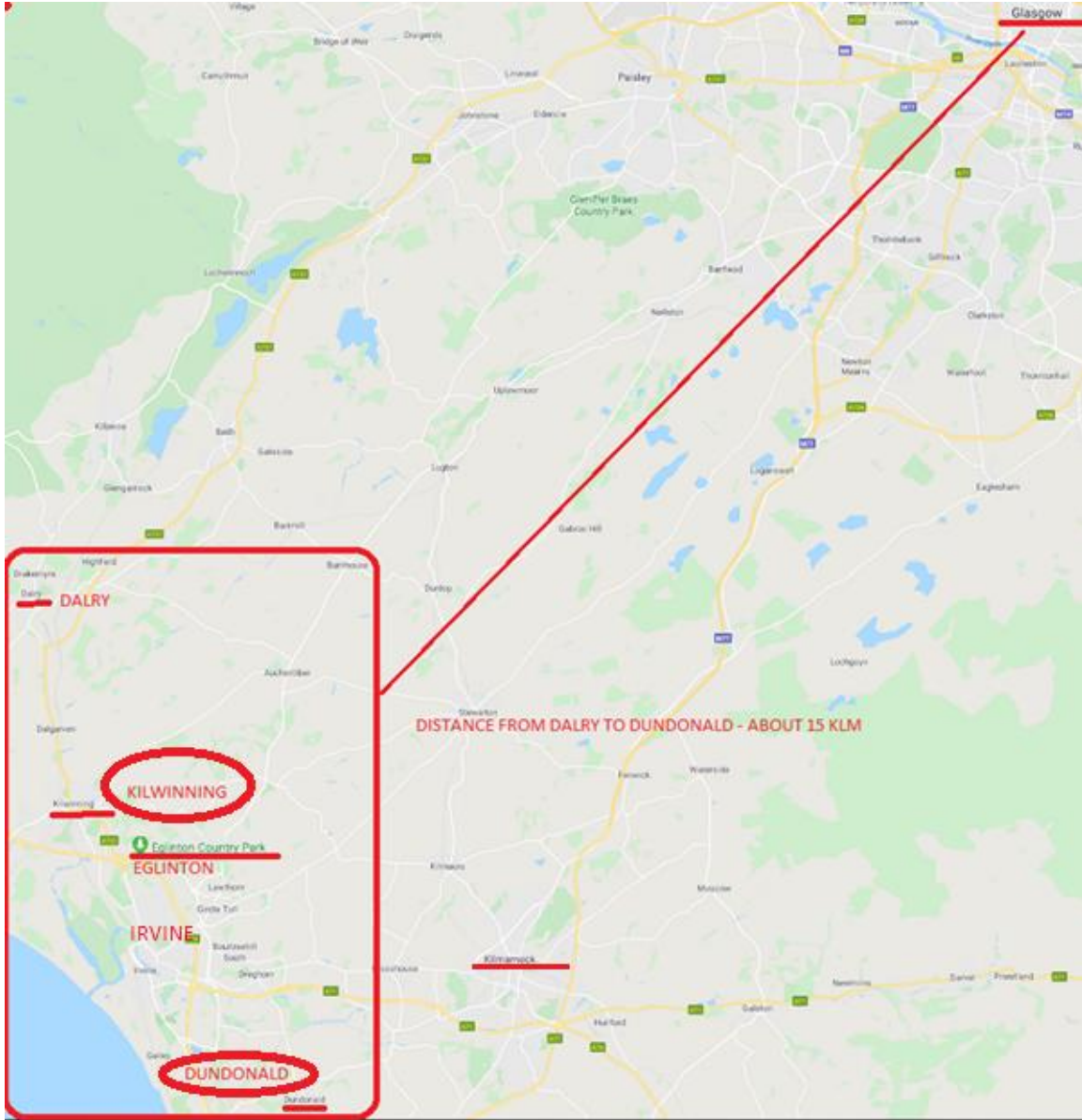
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- 24 He might have been universally regarded as modest and retiring- but from when I was a young boy I still have vivid memories of his booming voice and dominating presence when he held court around the dinner table at Glenlyon or in the sheep-yards, etc.



### Appendix 1

### The related “MacGregor Murray” clusters in Ayrshire Scotland (Kilwinning/Dundonald/Irvine/Dalry)





## Appendix 2

### The direct “MacGregor Murray” male ancestry of Kennedy Murray in Ayrshire, Scotland.

1. KENNEDY MURRAY – Born 24/8/1771 in Dundonald, Ayrshire, Scotland. Son of JOHN MURRAY [Jr] & ELIZABETH (KENNEDY) CALDER. Both John and Elizabeth both are listed on the marriage record as ‘servants’ of Countess Eglinton (Kennedy) at Eglinton Castle [SPR 590-10144]
2. John and Elizabeth married 25/2/1771 in Dundonald while Elizabeth was pregnant with Kennedy [SPR590-2048]
3. ELIZABETH CALDER born 1737 to John Calder and Elizabeth/Margaret Kennedy in Irvine [familysearch.org Ref. KLJ2-HCG]. She had three siblings we are aware of: Agnes Calder born in 1/12/1643 [SPR595-10120], James in 9/10/1743 [SPR595-10115], and William 23/3/1749 [SPR595-10129]. From our searches, it also seems that James Sr’s possible older sister Margaret married David Kennedy in Irvine in 1726 [SPR595-308].
4. JOHN MURRAY [Jr] born 25/3/1746 in Irvine to John Murray & Margaret Boyd [SPR599-1021]
5. JOHN MURRAY [Sr] born 14/3/1721 in Kilwinning to DAVID MURRAY & Agnes Steele [SPR599-10246].
6. DAVID MURRAY and Agnes Steele had another son ALEXANDER MURRAY born in Kilwinning in 29/6/1729 [SPR599-2011]. Like his brother John Murray, Alexander that both a son and grandson with the same name. Like David’s grandson John Murray (Kennedy’s father), his other grandson Alexander Murray also lived in Dundonald. There is strong evidence he was the ‘Alex Murray’ who came to assist Kennedy with Bail and a Petition of banishment to the colonies to avoid a possible hanging conviction for burglary. [i.e. the Alexander Murray who married Mary Dean in Dundonald on 11/3/1783 [SPR590-2063].
7. DAVID MURRAY born 19/4/1686 in Dalry to Hough (Hugh) Murray [SPR587-109]. Hugh had two more sons and a daughter (i.e. David’s siblings) - a Hugh (Jr) baptised 31/3/1689 (Kilwinning - SPR599-1063), James Murray baptised 4/5/1693 [Irvine SPR595-1011], and Anne baptised 11/4/1697 [Kilwinning SPR599-1092]
8. HUGH MURRAY Sr had two brothers - JOHN MURRAY who married Isabel Bouton in Kilwinning, 19/4/1686 [SPR599-10316] and ROBERT baptised 30/12/1658 [Kilmarnock 597-1074]. This Robert married Elizabeth Kirkward 19/11/1693 [Kilwinning 599-10336]. There was also sister Janet baptised 28/4/1667 [Kilmarnock 597-10104]
9. The father of Hugh, John, Robert and Janet was another JOHN MURRAY (Sr) married to ANNABELL WILSON. The family (the first Murrays on record in the area) is known to have lived at Kilmarnock (just a few kilometres away from Dundonald) as well as the other local clusters of the emerging related MacGregor-Murrays in this part of Ayrshire.

### Appendix 3

#### The two “MacGregor Murray” lines connected to Clan Gregor Chieftan lineages past and present

##### A. The post-1603 Clan Gregor Chieftan “LADASACH House”

*Overview: A son of the 10<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor (Gregor MacGregor), Iain “Dubh Nan Luirraig” MacGregor died in the 1603 Battle of Glen Fruin a part of the MacGregor leadership group under Iain’s uncle the 11<sup>th</sup> Chief Alasdair Ruadh. The Battle of Glen Fruin was the pretext for the Proscription that year against the use of the name MacGregor under penalty of death. With the Campbells and others seeking to hunt down and destroy the MacGregor clan leadership (the Glenstae and Glenloch/Lochaber MacGregors in particular) Iain MacGregor’s three young sons were under serious threat. However, their mother was Elizabeth Murray from the powerful Tullarbardine-Atholl Murrays (i.e. the line of the Murray Clan chiefs until the present day). The Murray Clan leadership took in and protected Elizabeth and sons. So, with the subsequent appointment of Elizabeth’s eldest son Gregor as the 11<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor, the Murrays effectively and also knowingly were protecting the MacGregor clan leadership position. The three sons all took on the name of Murray as ‘secret MacGregors’ – with Gregor MacGregor taking the alias “John Murray”.*

1. 12<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor – Gregor alias John Murray born 1599 and disappeared mysteriously from all records in 1639. Protected by the Murrays in his youth (and for life we believe). Was married at the time to Margaret Stirling who was from a well-known Scottish peerage family (she also disappeared mysteriously from known records at that time as well). In 1624 Gregor was ‘obliged to sell the MacGregor Glenstrae estate (along with the Tower of Stronmelochan) to the Campbells of Glenorchy who had orchestrated the campaign to destroy the MacGregor clan (including the Proscription). After this campaign against the clan abated somewhat. Yet in 1735 he and his younger brother Patrick were imprisoned in Edinburgh for being MacGregors. Soon after his release a year later he had handed over the Clan Chieftan role to Patrick and along with Margaret had simply ‘disappeared’ – suggesting a possible or even probable planned departure.
2. 13<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor – Patrick alias Patrick Murray born 1600 and became the 13<sup>th</sup> MacGregor clan chief in 1638 – with the protection it seems of the Glenorchy Campbells since Patrick married Jean, daughter of Sir Robert Campbell. This was after his brother Gregor/John apparently abdicated his position. Patrick had a son James who inherited his position.
3. 14<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor - James alias James Murray (Chief from 1649)\_ appears to have resumed the Gregor name in 1661 after the Proscription was temporally rescinded in 1761.
4. James did not have any sons and a Glenstrae relative Gregor MacGregor took on the position also dying childless in 1693 – the same year the Proscription was revived.
5. 15<sup>th</sup> Clan Gregor Chief – Colonel Gregor MacGregor, had already inherited the title and position of ‘Tutor of Glenstrae’. He was son of Duncan MacGregor.

6. Another Glenstrae Archibald MacGregor became the 16th Clan Gregor Chief at this time. Rather than Murray he took on the name of Graham of Kilmanan as his ‘secret MacGregor’ alias and family name.

**B. The second line of Murray MacGregors – part of the Glenclairnig line which has occupied the Gregor Clan Chieftan lineage since 1793.**

*Background: The ‘Glenclairning’ or ‘Lanrick/Balquhidder’ MacGregor line significantly links back to one of the most famous warrior-leaders – Duncan MacGregor of Ardchoille who, along with his two sons, was executed by the Campbells in 1552. He was the first Chieftan of the ‘Children of the Mist’ line within Clan Gregor and would have or should have been the Clan Gregor chief at the time except for Campbell influencing (many of the Gregarach still believe). And he certainly led the MacGregor resistance to the Campbells ‘war’ on the MacGregors. This line (originally from Ardchoille and later based in Balquhidder) had unsuccessful claims on the Clan Gregor Chieftan position at the 1710 election – but prevailed in 1775 with the election of Sir John MacGregor Murray, who also became the 1<sup>st</sup> Barinet of Lanrick and Balquidder in 1795. John was particularly close to the current Duke of Athol at the time, a relationship reinforced by his son marrying the Duke of Atholls’ daughter. We have reason to believe that this was an extension of the ‘nobility network’ ‘special relationship’ between the MacGregors and Murrays dating back to when the Murrays took in the three sons of Ian ‘Dubh Nan Luiraig’ MacGregor who died in the 1603 Battle of Glen Fruin and his wife Elizabeth Murray.*

ii. Glenclairnig “MacGregor Murrays” after Sir John MacGregor Murray

1. Sir John MacGregor Murray – Elected 20<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor in 1775 and appointed 1<sup>st</sup> Baronet of Lanrick and Balquidder in 1795. John and wife Anne Macleod had one son who became the 21<sup>st</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor
2. General Sir Evan John Murray MacGregor (1785-1841), 21<sup>st</sup> Chief and 2<sup>nd</sup> Baronet of Lanrick and Balquidder. Evan and wife Lady Elizabeth Murray (daughter of the Duke of Atholl) had nine children including the next chief of Clan Gregor Sir John Athol Bannatyne MacGregor
3. Sir John Atholl Bannatyne MacGregor (1810-1851) – 22<sup>nd</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor, but the last in this particular Glenclairnig line to make explicit reference to the MacGregor Murray connection (but others still do even today).
4. All the subsequent Chiefs of Clan Gregor down to the present Sir Malcolm MacGregor

ii. Glenclairnig “MacGregor Murrays” before Sir John MacGregor Murray

1. Sir John MacGregor Murray – Elected 20<sup>th</sup> Chief of Clan Gregor in 1775 and appointed 1<sup>st</sup> Baronet of Lanrick and Balquidder in 1795. As indicated John’s father was Evan.
2. Evan MacGregor known as John Murray (1715-1778). Evan was the brother of Duncan “MacGregor Murray, 3<sup>rd</sup> of Glencarnoch. He was also a professional soldier. As well as becoming a Jacobite Major by 1745, he was also the Aide de Camp to Bonnie Prince Charlie at that time. He later an officer in the 88<sup>th</sup> Highlanders. Evan’s father was John
3. John (MacGregor) Murray. (1688-1744). Had five children with wife Catherine Campbell. John was notably remembered for his quarrel with Rob Roy MacGregor in 1722.