

B. C. PIPERS' NEWSLETTER



**The official monthly publication of
the British Columbia Pipers' Association**

JANUARY, 1967.

No. 48.

2000

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B. C. P I P E R S' N E W S L E T T E R

Published monthly by the British Columbia Pipers' Association.

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The B.C. Pipers' Newsletter is published monthly at 3288 East 27th Ave., Vancouver, B.C., by the British Columbia Pipers' Association, and is distributed to all members. Subscription price to non-members is \$2.00 per year. Address all communications concerning the Newsletter to: The B.C. Pipers' Newsletter, 3288 East 27th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. Address all other communications to the Secretary, B.C. Pipers' Association, 2641 Ward Street, Vancouver, B.C.

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ANNUAL MEMBERS BANQUET: - FEBRUARY 18th, 1967.

The Annual Members Banquet will be held on February 18th, 1967, at the Stanley Park Sports Tearoom, cocktails to be served at 6:30 p.m. and dinner at 7:30.

Following the dinner will be a programme, convened by Mr. W. Lamont. If you have not yet been contacted and wish to get tickets, call the Secretary, HE 1-3621, or the Treasurer, HE 4-1591.

Capacity is limited, and tickets will be sold on a first-come basis. All members who have been to this banquet will agree that it has become a very pleasant part of the piping year.

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GENERAL MEETING - FEBRUARY 24th.

A General Meeting is planned for Friday, February 24th, in the band room of the Seaforth Armoury. All members are asked to attend.

- 0 -

KENNETH MACLEOD PASSES:

Members and friends of the Association were saddened to hear of the death of Kenneth MacLeod on January 29th, 1967, in Burnaby, B.C.

Kenny, who celebrated his 80th birthday on August 11th, was one of the first Life Members of the association, appointed on January 14th, 1961. He was an original member of the B.C. Pipers' Association, and was an enthusiastic competitor in his earlier days, and a devoted teacher and player in later years. Among the roster of his former pupils are our President, Rod. MacVicar, your Editor, Ian Walker, our past-President, the late Gordon Sinclair, and Mr. Hugh Aird, formerly of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada. Kenny's enthusiasm was unabated until his death, and he played his pipes regularly.

Funeral Service was held on February 1st, with Rev. Donald Gillies officiating. Mr. Roderick MacVicar played the ground of "Glengarry's Lament" at the Interment Service at Ocean View Burial Park.

Our sincerest sympathies go out to Mrs. Margaret MacLeod, Kenny's widow, also a great lover of the pipes, and a constant friend of the association, and to his son and daughter, Mr. Ian MacLeod, of Nanaimo and Mrs. Catherine Deildal, of Vancouver. Our sentiments can be summed up most adequately by the words of Rev. Gillies, who said at the conclusion of his service, "Kenny was a good man".

- 0 -

The CLANSMEN

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BI-MONTHLY COMPETITION - JANUARY 20th, 1967.

A somewhat smaller turnout for this competition - Juvenile Marches and Open Amateur Strathspeys and Reels - possibly due to Burn's Night commitments, did not detract from an enjoyable evening of piping with a wide selection of tunes. Our judge for the evening was Mr. Donald Murray and Mr. Wm. Lamont judged the deportment. The following were adjudged winners:

Juvenile Marches (18 competitors)

1. David Anderson
2. Sandy Marshall
3. Douglas Bernon
4. Terry Leonard
5. Jimmy Leonard

Open Amateur Strathspeys & Reels: (4 competitors)

1. Dal Jessiman
2. Kelly Hagan
3. Donald MacMillan

Deportment:

- Juvenile - Wayne Rodgers
Open Amat.- Dal Jessiman

The next Bi-Monthly competition will be Friday, February 17th, consisting of Novice Old Highland Airs and Junior Piobaireachd. All novice competitors and teachers are urged to have this class ready to play at 7:30 p.m. please, as it is anticipated there will be ten competitors in the Piobaireachd class and we do not want to overstay our 11:00 p.m. competition time, if at all possible.

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ROUND THE GAMES WITH JOHN WILSON:

HAMILTON INDOOR GAMES, OCTOBER 22nd, 1966. (NORTH AMERICAN MINIATURE
BAND CHAMPIONSHIP)

I had quite made up my mind to attend this meet as a spectator, but, as the old saying has it, "There's no rest for the wicked". and the telephone rang one night and it was Sandy Keith asking me to judge. I was pleased to be able to accept, and so, bright and early on a fine Saturday morning, I entered the armouries on James Street.

I had to judge the Piobaireachd event myself and it was scheduled to start at 9:00 a.m. The first player, Stewart Crawford, commenced his tune at 9:10 a.m. so we were off to a good start. This year all competitors, (soloists and bands) had to submit two Piobaireachds or two sets, and the Piobaireachd or set chosen was printed against the name on the programme. This is an excellent idea. The first piobaireachd was "The Sound of the Waves against the Castle of Duntroon". This young lad made a fine job of his tune. There were one or two misses in the first line of Var. 2 doubling and the dotted notes in this Var. should have been held longer. There was a choke at the end of the first line of the Crunluath singling. Excitement made Stewart blow too strongly throughout the Urlar which made the F note sound sharp. From Var. 1 onwards it sounded quite good. His drones were out a little by the end of the Urlar and gradually got worse.

Robt. Henderon played "The Lament for the old Sword" and started his tune at 9:29 a.m. He played well apart from the following The E's at the end of each line of the Urlar were too short High A strikes were left out in the doubling of the dithis. In the first line of the Crunluath he went off and failed to repeat the line. His chanter was a bit flat but his drones were excellent all the way.

Chris. Anderson played "The Bells of Perth" and started to play at 9:55 a.m. He broke down in the middle of the Crunluath. Until then, he had given a splendid performance on a well balanced and perfectly tuned pipe. His concentration must have slackened for a second and that's all it takes. Most people do not appreciate how difficult it is to play a Piobaireachd right through without making one single mistake. In the Tune's duration of approximately twelve minutes not one grace note must be left out, and not one extra grace note must be put in. Every movement must be clean and distinct, and the expression and timing must be just right. Needless to say, the instrument itself must be sweet and true, with the drones tuned to perfection, and remaining perfectly steady throughout the whole tune. Some Pipers become so engrossed with their tune that I have seen and heard a Starter's pistol go off with a loud report right beside a competing Piper, and he didn't bat an eyelid or make a mistake. At another time, the scrape of a chair was sufficient to put a player completely off.

Jas. Fryer played "The Little Spree" commencing at 10:16 a.m. He made a very good job of it and his Pipe was excellent.

Ken Hutchinson started to play "Scarce of Fishing" and scarcely finished the ground.

Bill Gilmour played "Lament for the Earl of Antrim" and gave an excellent rendering of it. He started at 10:39 a.m. and the only faults I found in this beautiful tune were as follows: - A miss in the middle line of Var. 1 doubling. A choke in the middle line of the Cruinluath doubling. A little something which I couldn't put a name to in the third line of Var. 111, and the same sort of thing in the first line of the Cruinluath a Mach. Chanter and drones were excellent from start to finish.

John Goodenow played "The King's Taxes" and started at 11:00 a.m. This is a beautiful tune and a very difficult and testing composition. I must say I thought John played it in masterly fashion and I thoroughly enjoyed listening to it. Pipe excellent all the way through with a beautiful High "G" played with the "F" finger on.

Here are the results:

1. John Goodenow (97 pts)
2. Bill Gilmour (96 pts)
3. Jas. Fryer (91 pts)
4. S. Crawford (85 pts)

Shortly after the Piobaireachd event finished, Sandy Keith and I judged the Open March, Strathspeys & Reels. Fifteen competitors took part, and the playing was very good. The acoustics on the main floor of the Armouries are rather bad and when thoughtless people allow doors to bang behind them, first at one end of the Armouries and then the other, and sometimes at both ends at once, it makes listening difficult for everyone, and certainly can't help the competitors. I know it's hard to believe, but when one piper was actually competing on the platform, a drummer played on his drum for about 12 paces before disappearing into a side room. I think it's about time that Pipe Majors and Drum Majors made it clear to their personnel that playing instruments near where a competition is being held, is rank bad manners and shows appalling ignorance.

Results:

1. Chris Anderson (94½ pts)
2. Bill Gilmour (93½ pts)
3. Alex Dewar (92½ pts)
4. John Noble & John Goodenow (92 pts)

16 and Under March: (Judge D. Gibson)

1. Kerry MacDonald
2. Trudy Campbell
3. Gail Brown
4. Betty Anne Muckle

16 and Under Strathspeys & Reels:

1. Trudy Campbell
2. Gail Brown
3. Kerry MacDonald
4. Betty Anne Muckle

Drum Major's Contest (Judge D.M. Gilruth)

1. Norm Mackenzie - 48th Highlanders
2. Colin Stewart

Base Drum Competition (Judge D.M. Gilruth)

1. A. Herd
2. J. Orr.

3rd North American Miniture Pipe Band Championships:

1. Clan McFarlane # 2	96 $\frac{5}{8}$ pts	The Highland Wedding The Cal. Society of London The Ewes
2. City of Toronto # 1	96 pts	Brig. Gen. Cheape Blair Drummond The Sheepwife
3. Can. Gen. Electric (piping)	94 $\frac{1}{2}$ pts	The Duchess of Edinburgh The Cameronian Rant Mrs. McPherson of Inveran
4. 48th Highlanders	94 $\frac{1}{2}$ pts	Dugald MacColl's Farewell to Fr. The Bob o' Fettercairn Mrs. McPherson

The success of the City of Toronto Pipe Band in the World Championship at Inverness, Scotland, seems to have removed any inferiority complex our bands may have had, because in this contest I heard the finest group Piping I think I've ever heard, and the Drumming Judge assured me that the standard of drumming was very high and close also. Twelve Bands competed and according to my points six obtained seventy two or more points out of a possible seventy five. The winning band may never again attain such perfection but their performance shows it can be done, and five other bands were close behind. I may have given maximum points to a band before but I can't remember doing so; on this occasion I had no hesitation.

Piping Judges: Alex. Keith, Hamilton
John Wilson, Toronto
Drumming Judge: A. Jack

Best Drum Corps:

1. 48th Highlanders, Toronto (96 pts)
2. Clan McFarlane # 2, St. Catharines (94 $\frac{1}{2}$ pts)

The attendance seemed about the same as last year but the organisers and their helpers must be congratulated on their fine effort. The competitors, one and all, put on a splendid show, and even the massed bands gave a fine display. Altogether, a most enjoyable day.

- John Wilson -

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JOHN WILSON'S BOOK 3 - THE CANADIAN CENTENNIAL COLLECTION:

John Wilson's Book 3, designated appropriately "The Centennial Collection of Highland Bagpipe Music" is a new collection containing both original compositions by Canadian and American pipers, and some old favourites in new settings. Produced with the assistance of the Canadian Centennial Commission, this book was printed with the end in view, to use John Wilson's words "to concentrate on compositions by Canadian composers and thereby celebrate the Canadian Centennial of Confederation".

A good number of the tunes are John Wilson's own, and each category of the small music is represented by this versatile composer: Slow March, 2/4 March, 6/6 March, Retreat, 9/8 March, Polka, Strathspey, Reel, Jig and Hornpipe.

Especially interesting we found "The Delaware Highland Gathering", a tricky 6 part March, with shifting accented beats, and with a 6th part containing triplets which John advises solo pipers and bands not to try unless they can make a good job of it. "The Canadian Centennial March" is a pretty 6/8 which intermediate pipers should be able to play well without too much difficulty. Not so, though, with the hornpipe "The Finger Control" or the reel "The Lads wi' the Delicate Ears", fine pieces taking much perserverence to master.

Included in the collection are tunes by W.J. Watt, Winnipeg, Man. (formerly of Vancouver, B.C.), P.M. Cairns Camp Petawawa, Ont., P.M. Neil Sutherland, Winnipeg, Man., Jas. McColl Los Angeles, P.M. W. Gilmour, and Angus Graham, of Prince George, B.C.

Some modern history is recorded in the names of some of the pieces, with "Lament for John F. Kennedy (W.J. Watt)", "The Canadian Centennial March" (J. Wilson), "The Boats at Dunkirk" (W.J. Watt), and "Heroes of the Hook" (P.M. A. Hain, Cleveland U.S.A.). Also a sense of humour was exhibited in the naming of some tunes, with "The Accepted Suitor (Jimmy McColl) and "The Auld Wifie's Tongue" (Angus Graham).

You will also find some of the stand-bys such as "MacLean of Pennycross", "Millbank Cottage", "Miss Elspeth Campbell". "The Stirlingshire Militia", "Arniston Castle", "Devil in the Kitchen" and "Miss Proud".

Finally, included in this most interesting book is a list of some of the Highlights of John Wilson's piping career, from 1915, when he took his first lesson, to 1918, when he lost major parts of the thumb, forefinger and middle finger of his left hand in an explosion of part of a detonator, and 1925, when he won the Gold Medal - Piobaireachd at the Northern Meeting, and 1940, when he was captured at St. Valery remaining a prisoner of war until 1945, (only to mention a few); as well as the contents of Books 1 & 2.

We know that if you haven't acquired a copy of this recent publication, you would be well advised to buy one, as it will undoubtedly be a necessary part of the well-informed piper's library.

JOHN WILSON'S BOOK 3.

1867

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1967

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LONDON LETTER - SCOTTISH PIPING SOCIETY OF LONDON'S COMPETITIONS:

(from The Oban Times, Jan. 5th, 1967)

The Arthur Wright Cup for piobaireachd was won by Martin Lowe, when the Scottish Piping Society of London's competitions for members were held in Chelsea. Martin, a pupil of Pipe-Major R. Barron, played "The Wee Spree".

Pipe-Major Barron, a piping instructor at St. Andrews University, is a regular playing member of the Society. Second prize went to Dr. Rainsford-Hannay, playing "The Old Woman's Lullaby". Third was Robert Ashe with "Glengarry's March".

The 2/4 march competition for the Robert Fisher Cup was won by Robert Nimmo playing "Pipe-Major John Stewart". Second was Martin Lowe, the piobaireachd winner, who chose for his march "Young MacGregor". The march cup was presented by Major Robert Fisher, United States Air Force, ten years ago on his departure for America after a tour of duty in England and Germany. Major Fisher, a very keen piper and the son of a native-born Scot, lives in California.

Six competitors participated in the two events, which were judged by David Ross and Kenneth Bell.

A welcome visitor in the audience was Pipe-Major Angus MacAulay, on holiday in Benbecula from New Zealand, who came south to visit friends in London. He was requested to give a selection, and despite his 14 years down under is still playing well. He has been invited to judge at the society's annual competitions in April where many more of his friends and pupils in London will be glad to meet him.

The society's two ceol mor recitals were played to a packed hall. Pipe-Major Alex R. MacDonald gave a fine interpretation of "Isobel Mackay", and the second recital was by Pipe-Major Bob Hill with a very musical rendering of "The Battle of Auldearn".

(Ed. Why shouldn't someone play well after 14 years in New Zealand?)

PIPERS REVOLT: (from The Oban Times, Jan. 5, 1967)

Canada proudly claims that she has more pipers than Scotland, and at present pipers and Scots-Canadians in general are up-in-arms against a ruling by the Canadian Government Defence Department, refusing to class army pipers as musicians.

The defence department point out that members of other bands have to play more than one instrument to be classed as musicians and thus earn an extra twenty dollars a month. The piper with his one instrument does not come into the musicians category as a result of this ruling.

The Piobaireachd Society in Scotland fought for many years to raise the status of Army pipe-majors when the equivalent rank was only colour-sergeant. After the last war, the War Office ruled that a pipe-major could reach the rank of warrant officer.

Pipe-Majors Bob Hill and Willie MacLeod were prisoners-of-war, in Bavaria, and tell the "Oban Times" that the Germans recognised pipers as Army musicians and gave them extra privileges.

They were allowed time to practice, and after getting back their instruments were allowed to receive pipes and reeds from home through the Red Cross. Permission was later given to pipers and drummers to form a band. Pipe-Major Hill has a brother who is a pipe-major in the Canadian Guards.

- 0 -

NEW PIPING COMPETITION FOR SKYE:

My father, Seton Gordon, has written to ask that I advise those B.C. Pipers who may be interested about a new piping competition which will take place next year in Skye.

This is being organised by Dame Flora MacLeod of MacLeod (now 89) for the night of the Skye Games and is open only to winners of the Gold Medal at Oban or Inverness or the Gold Dunvegan Medal at the Skye Games. The winner will receive a MacCrimmon Medal.

The Skye Games are usually held during the first half of August, and this would appear to be a competition of considerable interest to Piobaireachd enthusiasts, and those members in Scotland this summer should try to attend.

- Alasdair Gordon -

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The Vancouver Ladies Pipe Band will hold their annual Festival of Piping and Dancing on February 24 and 25 in the Vancouver Heights United Church, Education Unit hall, 3895 Albert Street, one block North of Hastings.

A new feature this year will be a competition class for Individual Tenor Drumming. Entry forms for all events may be obtained from Mrs. M. Nairn, 150 S. Boundary, phone 298-4886 up to Feb. 10.

Both programme sessions commence at 9 a.m. each day.

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BAGPIPE MUSIC INDEX:

An unusual publication entitled "Bagpipe Music Index" has recently appeared, which should be of considerable assistance to collectors of bagpipe music. Produced by James R. Coldren and Donald Varella, of Glen Ridge, New Jersey, this book is available at 57 Clark Street, Glen Ridge, New Jersey, 07028, U.S.A., for the sum of \$1.00

It presents an alphabetical listing of 2,430 tunes taken from 35 books, said to be currently available. For each tune is given the composer's name, where available, the book from which it is taken, page number, type of tune, its time and the number of its parts.

It may be of considerable interest to you to note the books from which the listings were taken. According to the "Bagpipe Music Index" these books are currently available. See how complete your library is!

Army Manual, Books 1 & 2
College of Piping Tutor, Books 1 & 2
Cowal Collection, Books 1 & 2
Edcath Collection, Books 1 & 2
Glenailan Collection
Glendaruel Collection
Glen's Tutor
Irish Tunes
Logan's Tutor
MacLellan Collection
MacLennan Collection
MacLeod Collection, Books 1, 2 & 3
MacNeill Collection
Master Method
McCullough's Collection
Music for Dancing
Pipe Band Association Tutor
Piper's Delight
Queen's Own Highlanders
Ross Collection, Books 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Scots Guards
Sutherland Collection
Wilson Collection, Books 1, 2 & 3

Do any of you know of books published in the last thirty years which are not on this list. If so, we would be pleased to learn about them.

In a recent paper we read of the cocktail party of the Royal Warrant Holders' Association, a society of about 1,000 craftsmen and merchants selling goods and services to the British monarch and her household, at which the Queen will meet with a chimney sweep and a fishmonger. In the article it stated that besides the chimney sweep and the fishmonger would attend warrant holders of such esoteric occupations as the royal muffin man, the royal bagpipe maker and the royal clock-winder. I wonder what these gentlemen talk about?

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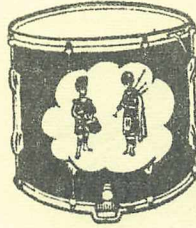
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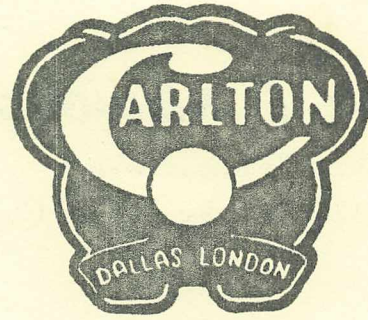
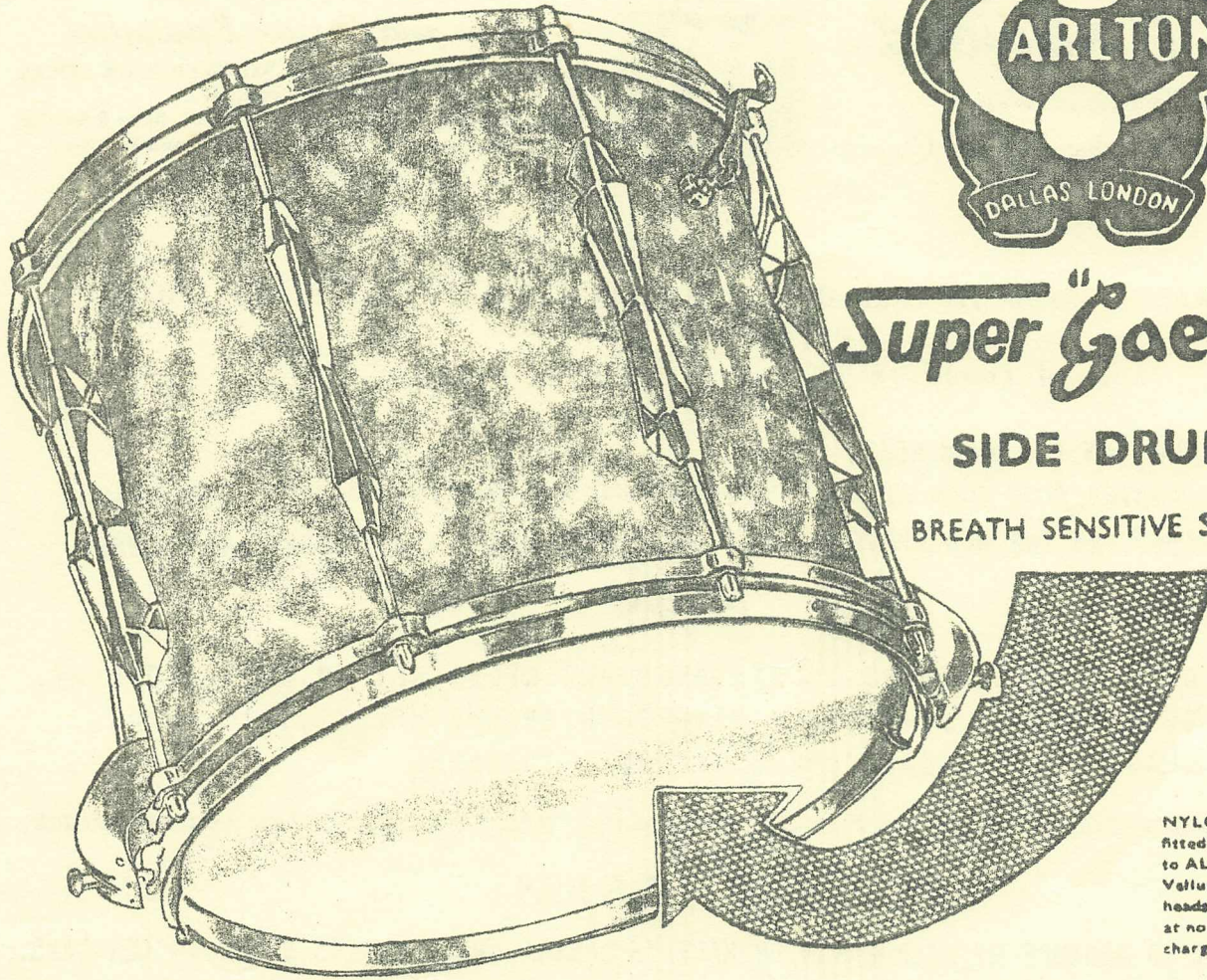
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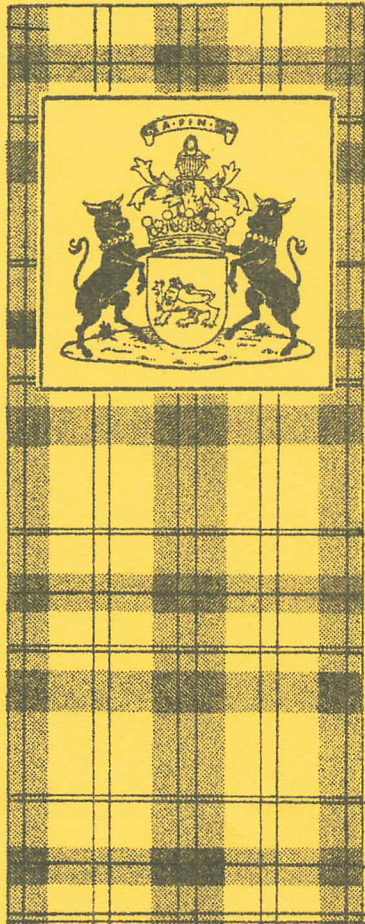
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