

Discovering the Scotch Cemetery Brock Township, Ontario, Canada by Garth M Bray

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The Scotch Cemetery (originally called the *Scotch Burying Ground*), located in the 8th Concession¹ of Brock Township, Ontario, is the burial site for nearly 350 Tیره emigrants and their descendants. I ‘discovered’ the Scotch Cemetery on learning that my McLean and McCallum ancestors, who had emigrated from Tیره to Brock Township in the late 1850s, were buried there.

Three miles west of the village of Manilla, which borders on Brock and Mariposa Townships, an unpaved roadway leads from Highway 7 up the eastern slope a small hill to the entrance to the Scotch Cemetery (below, left). Adjacent to the highway, the rectangle-shaped cemetery is located on the crest and western slope of the hill and is surrounded on three sides by farm fields. Grave-sites are located in two parts of the cemetery: the eastern or upper section on the crest of the hill, and the western or lower section at the bottom of the western slope of the hill; between these two sections there is an open area on the slope of the hill without graves (below, right).



Roadway to the Scotch Cemetery from Ontario Highway #7 (on the left). Photograph (2009-04-11) courtesy of Paul Hector.



View of the Scotch Cemetery looking east from the western (lower) section. Photograph (2009-04-05) courtesy of Paul Hector.

In 2000, when my wife and I first visited the Scotch Cemetery, we were delighted to find the gravestone of my great-great-grandparents, Donald and Mary McCallum, as well as one for the Mary McCallum who was Donald’s mother and my great-great-great-grandmother. Because we were unable to find memorial stones to indicate the graves of Donald’s maternal grandmother, Mary McDonald (née Henderson), or of Malcolm and Mary McLean (my other direct Tیره ancestors), I set out to find and explore records that might indicate the burial sites of these other ancestors. This article is a summary of the results of that journey of discovery.

¹ Most Ontario counties were divided into strips of land called “concessions” that were usually separated by a road allowance; concessions were subdivided into lots of 100 or 200 acres.

History of the Scotch Cemetery

This burying ground was originally acquired in 1853. The Trustees of the Burying Ground (Neil D. McPhadden, Neil A. McLean, and Hector A. McDonald) purchased 1.5 acres of land from Neil McDonald for a sum of 20 Pounds. The original deed of land was made on January 8th, 1853, and was subsequently registered at the County of Ontario on the 1st day of July, 1869.

Coulthard's Corner (Manilla), located east of the Scotch Cemetery was settled in the early 1800's by the English, Welsh, Irish, Dutch, and Scottish and, at the time, had a population of approximately 700 persons. The community supported a number of businesses including hotels, tannery, blacksmiths, harness shops, etc.

A board of trustees to oversee the burying ground was elected to oversee the maintenance of the burying ground. Five members, and later three, met on a regular basis either in each others' homes or at the Congregational Church or Baptist Church in Manilla. In addition, the board hosted a number of public meetings for the benefit of the plot holders. Minutes of the board of trustees reveal that they dealt with such matters as fencing the cemetery, fund raising for the cemetery upkeep, and establishment of prices for plots. Plots within the cemetery were sold for \$5.00/square rod in 1892; by 1956 the cost of a plot was \$89.60/square rod with a stipulation that the plot holders were responsible for the stones. Requests for tree planting and shrubs required the approval of the cemetery board.

The Scotch Cemetery Board of Trustees was dissolved in 1995 in favour of the Township of Brock. By that time, there were only two members on the board, the cemetery was in need of attention, and little funds were available to undertake grounds maintenance.

(Source: www.townshipofbrock.ca - 15 April 2006)

Plot Names and Transcriptions

Information from several sources directed me to three main documents that contained the names of individuals buried in the Scotch Cemetery of Brock Township.

Plan of the Scotch Cemetery, 8th Concession, Brock Township drawn by Richard A. Purvis. There are two versions of this Plot Map – one hand-written and the other typed. The original copies of both versions are located in the Brock Township Office, Cannington, Ontario.

The two-page hand-written version ends with the statement: *Plan of Scotch Cemetery drawn by R. A. Purvis from information given by Allan McLean and Neil McPhaden. Though it may not be absolutely correct, it has been made from the best information that could be obtained.* In this version, a copy of which accompanies this article (Appendix 1), Mr. Purvis wrote the name of the plot owner as well as other identifying facts. Mr. McLean and Mr. McPhaden later added plot numbers.

There is no date on the hand-drawn version of the plot map but it was probably created before 1915: R.A. Purvis died in 1924, Neil McPhaden in 1922 and Allan McLean in 1915 (Archives of Ontario, Registration of Deaths, 1869-1934). Names in a different hand-writing were added by later authors.

There is also a typed version of the first page (Western Section) of the Purvis Plot Map. It begins with the following statement: *The rough sketch below was compiled by R.A. Purvis in the Eighth Concession Cemetery better known as the Scotch Cemetery. There apparently was no survey of the cemetery made, at least of the older [western] portion lying below the hill. During the very earliest years, it would appear that each family as they required a plot apportioned off a certain amount of land adjacent to [that of] some other friends and of sufficient size to accommodate their respective families.*

It is not claimed that this sketch is complete or even accurate in details but is intended to contain the best information available at [the] date it was made. The information was supplied largely by Mr. Allan McLean on whose farm the cemetery is situated, and Neil McPhaden who was intimately acquainted with many of the families of the early history of the Township. Those two along with the writer spent many hours in the cemetery going over the plots, locating the graves and placing their relative location on [the] within plan.

In order that this partial record may possibly be the better preserved, it has been made in triplicate, one copy being placed in the possession of Alexander McInnis, son of Archie McInnis, another in the hands of Andrew Dixon McLean, son of D.C. McLean, and the other in the hands of R.A. Purvis, son of Thomas Purvis and Catherine McPhaden.

It is not certain who prepared the typed version of the first page of the Purvis Plot Map but, based on the text included on the page, it would appear that *the writer*, R.A. Purvis, created it himself. Because Mr. Purvis died in 1924, the year “1939”, hand-written on the typed document, was likely added by a later researcher. Plots are not numbered on this version of the map and there are occasional discrepancies (? transcription errors) between the names on the two version (e.g. Plot 8 – “Donald McQueen” in the hand-written version is typed as “Donald McInnis”).

Alphabetical List of Names on Gravestones prepared by Donald A. MacFadyen. Mr. MacFadyen photographed each grave-stone and prepared an index of the names that also included dates and other information as well as a unique number for each photograph. Each photo number begins with “88” or “89”, which indicates the year that it was taken. Importantly for cross-referencing, the MacFadyen index also includes plot numbers that correspond to those on the Purvis Plot Map.

Regrettably, the location of Mr. MacFadyen’s detailed photographic record or of his complete descriptions of the memorial stones is not known; only the index and a few draft pages of his full transcription have survived. The date on this Index, *19 Apr ‘90*, appears to be the date that the document was submitted to, or received by the Ontario Genealogical Society, from whom the MacFadyen Index was obtainable until it was replaced by the current OGS transcription done in 1999.

The Scotch Cemetery - transcriptions by the Ontario Genealogical Society. This document was published in 1999 by the Whitby/Oshawa Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society (Source: ISBN 0-7779-1344-5). It includes complete transcriptions and an alphabetical index of names to 1999; the grave-stones (rather than plots) are numbered from 1-104.

Comparison Charts

In the accompanying charts, I have compared the available information for both the Western (lower) and Eastern (upper) sections of the cemetery. Grave locations are indicated in the charts according to their number on the Purvis Plot Map (Appendix 1). The other information is derived from the alphabetical list prepared in 1990 by Donald A. McFadyen and the 1999 transcription by the Ontario Genealogical Society of gravestones in the Scotch Cemetery. The data from these sources were supplemented or amended based on information from Louise MacDougall, Paul Hector, Glenda Franklin, Rob Marshall, Shirley Sedore, Betty McKinnon, and Lynn Clark. I am pleased to acknowledge that the preparation of these charts was profoundly influenced by the breadth and depth of their collective knowledge of the Scotch Cemetery and the Brock Township families buried there. Their information, as well as the Ontario Death Records available at Ancestry.com, permitted the resolution of some of the discrepancies between the MacFadyen and OGS transcriptions.

The Comparison Charts are presented in two forms: Appendix 2 is sorted (indexed) by the surname on the memorial stones or plot maps and Appendix 3 is sorted by the plot number on the Purvis Map. Errors detected or discrepancies noted between the MacFadyen and OGS transcriptions and highlighted in red. Researchers who have questions about particular entries in the Comparison Charts may contact the author by e-mail.

Searching for Missing Burial Sites of McLean Ancestors

The information summarized in Appendices 2 and 3 assisted, but did not solve, my search for the graves of Malcolm (1812-1885) and Mary (1812-1895) McLean, my great-great-grandparents. Data from Archives of Ontario death records had confirmed that Malcolm and Mary McLean died in Brock Township in 1885 and 1895, respectively. A statement in an announcement of the death of Mary McLean (née McKinnon) that appeared in the Sonya District news of *The Watchman* (Lindsay, Ontario) for January 16, 1896 was the only clue to their burial site: *The remains were interred in the Scotch burial ground to the west of Manilla.*

(No death announcement is available for Malcolm McLean, who also died in Brock Township, but it seems likely that he and his wife would have been buried in the same cemetery.)

Although many memorial stones in the Scotch Cemetery bear the surname, McLean (which is understandable considering that Tiree was once the domain of the McLean Clan), no such stone for Malcolm or Mary McLean was found during my 2000 visit or among the existing transcriptions. However, a comparison of the names on the Purvis Plot Map with the information in the MacFadyen Index identified four plots with which the name "Malcolm McLean" was associated:

<u>Plot #</u>	<u>Name (Purvis Map)</u>	<u>Memorial Stone Information (MacFayden Index)</u>
43	Neil A. McLean	Malcolm McLean, d. 1880, age 27, s/o Neil A. McLean
60	Malcolm McLean	No grave-stone identified
72	Malcolm McLean	Catharine McLain, d. 1852, age 50, w/o Malcolm McLain
125	Neil A. McLean	John McLean, d. 1935, age 68, s/o Malcolm and Mary McLean

Knowing the ages, death dates and children's names for my Malcolm and Mary McLean allowed me to eliminate Plots #43, #72, and #125 from further consideration. Plot #60 remains as the possible burial site of my great-great-grandparents although confirmation awaits the discovery of additional information.

Restoration Work in the Scotch Cemetery

When we re-visited the Scotch Cemetery in September, 2008, it was apparent that restoration work had been done on the grounds. Mr. Thomas G. Gettinby, Municipal Clerk informed me that Brock Township, which is now responsible for the Scotch Cemetery, had contracted Sanderson Monument of Orillia to work on the grounds and monuments: *... broken pieces of monuments that were in the north fence row of the Cemetery were retrieved and reattached to the original headstones. The next phase of work planned for the Cemetery, budget permitting, is to reassemble and place the remaining broken marble monument pieces into a cairn which would not necessarily mark the original grave sites.* (Source: Letter dated October 8, 2008)

One of the headstones recovered (below, left) during this 2008 restoration work, was the original one for Donald McCallum (1819-1856), my great-great-grandfather. In addition, the top-section, which was missing when I visited in 2000, had been re-placed on the granite headstone that currently marks the burial site of Donald McCallum and his wife, Mary (d. 1872), my great-great-grandparents (below, right).



Original Gravestone – Donald McCallum
*In memory of/ Donald McCallum/ who/
departed this life/ Apr 12, 1856*



Current gravestone of Donald McCallum (1819-1856)
and his wife, Mary (1825-1872). The top portion of the
monument was restored in 2008.

Future Prospects

The Scotch Cemetery has survived for more than 150 years. Over the decades, responsibility for its upkeep has shifted from the families whose relatives were buried there to dedicated volunteers who solicited donations from the families who had moved away (particularly to Bruce County, Ontario, Western Canada), and, more recently, to the Township of Brock. The Township is to be commended for its foresight in embarking on a program of maintenance and restoration. By so doing, the municipal administration and citizens of Brock Township are not only paying sincere homage to the hundreds of Tíree emigrants who made the harrowing journey to North America during the first half of the 19th century but are also assuring the preservation of a valuable historical resource for present and future genealogists regarding their Brock Township roots.

From a genealogical perspective, the prospect for making additional discoveries in the Scotch Cemetery is also encouraging. The invaluable information that was so diligently recorded by Mr. R.A. Purvis and Mr. D.A. MacFadyen is being supplemented by contemporary researchers. For example, Paul Hector, a descendant of the McLeans and Clarks buried in Plots #58 and #59, has unearthed memorial stones and grave markers that were previously unknown.

I look forward to hearing from other Tíree descendants who might have additional information about the people buried in this remarkably peaceful cemetery, which has been so carefully preserved by the community and the Township of Brock.

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Appendices

1. Scotch Cemetery – hand-drawn map of plots 1- 81 (page 1) and plots 101-142 (page 2)
2. Scotch Cemetery - Comparison Chart Indexed by Surname
3. Scotch Cemetery - Comparison Chart Indexed by Plot Number