

P993 The MacLeod Collection
RECORDS' IDENTITY STATEMENT

Reference number: GB1741/P993

Alternative reference number:

Title: The MacLeod Collection

Dates of creation: 1874-1920

Level of description: Fonds

Extent: 4 volumes; 0.59GB

Format: Paper, PDF

RECORDS' CONTEXT

Name of creators: David MacLeod; John MacLeod; various

Administrative history: Diaries of David MacLeod

Written by Dàibhidh MacLeòid (David MacLeod) before being held by brother Eathan MacLeòid (John MacLeod), niece Laura MacLeod (Steven) and great-grand-nephew Adam MacLeod (Byrne).

David was born at Leodibest, Strath of Latheronwheel, a native Caithness Gaelic speaker and eldest son of Kenneth MacLeod and wife Janet Sutherland. Kenneth's MacLeods were said to have originated in Strathnaver and before that, Assynt. They came to Latheron via Burringil, Forse and before that, Achverga farm, Halkirk.

Kenneth's father James was a cooper and met his mother, Lucy MacKenzie in Helmsdale. Her mother Rose MacPherson was said to have eloped with her father Kenneth in a "runaway match" as her own father was reputed to have been a general in the British Army.

Kenneth MacLeod ran the Latheron shop from 1854 until 1890 when he sold all his stock and moved south to reside with his son, and David MacLeod's

brother, John in Edinburgh. John was by that time a policeman there.

David's mother Janet's people were Sutherlands and Barnies who all belonged to Leodibest (mentioned often in the diaries) and neighbouring crofts and farms in the Latheron hinterland for many generations previously.

David himself never had much luck with work, travelling far and wide across the UK to seek it, but never managing to find a "situation" for very long. His writing shows no regard for his own Gaelic language and culture, apart from a desultory note here and there saying that he attended the local Gaelic service.

John MacLeod recalled that their parents "only spoke Gaelic when they didn't want me to understand what they were saying", but since David was marked on the 1881 census as an habitual speaker, we must assume that Gaelic was used in the house and that this practice only faded in later years.

Gaelic was held in extremely high regard by John in later life and a lasting ire was passed on to his daughter about its loss to the family. David was a conflicted Christian; although active in the local young men's associations and the like and a keen church-goer, he appears to have been obsessed with bringing about a "second birth" due to his strict Free Church upbringing, something which never seemed to happen for him. His writing is heaving with terrible guilt and mental anguish over his perceived sin and lack of breakthrough on this front. His forced walk home from Liverpool to Perth after failing to find employment is a particular low, although in retrospect makes superb reading material.

David was to die at the tender age of 39 after venturing out for a walk with the Sunday paper from his brother John's house in Morningside, Edinburgh, before perishing from hypothermia. He fell

asleep on Corstorphine Hill in December 1892 and never woke up.

David MacLeod (01/11/1853-02/12/1892)

Diary of John MacLeod

This diary was composed By Eathan MacLeòid (John MacLeod) between the years of 1909 and 1920 and written from the perspective of John's new-born daughter Laura, who as the diary progresses, grows and engages in numerous childhood activities such as going to the beach with her parents, riding on public transport of the time and visiting her father's childhood home of Latheron, Caithness. Caithness material, although brief, does mention local people and places.

Custodial history:

The diaries were deposited by David Macleod's great-grand-nephew Àdhamh MacLeòid (Adam MacLeod Byrne).

RECORDS' CONTENT

Description:

Diaries of David and John MacLeod, Latheron, giving an insight into everyday life, work, religion, habits and culture of the period.

The diaries also include newspaper cuttings, transcripts of songs and poems and many annotations by two family members, namely his younger brother John MacLeod and John's daughter Laura MacLeod Steven (Adam's maternal grandmother). There is also a list of David's siblings by his father Kenneth MacLeod, then shopkeeper at Latheron.

The diaries are also available as PDF files.

Appraisal:

-

Accruals:

Expected

RECORDS' CONDITION OF ACCESS AND USE

Access:	Some restrictions
Closed until:	-
Access conditions:	Physical diaries will only be produced with prior consent of the depositor. Please let the archive staff know if you would like a request for access to be submitted. PDF files available without consent in the Archive searchroom.
Copying:	Copying permitted within standard Copyright Act parameters
Finding aids:	Available in Archive searchroom and online

ALLIED MATERIALS

Related material:	CC/7/5 – Latheron Parish Records CC/5/3/26-38 – Latheron Parish Schools CC/5/4/5 - Latheron School Board SUTH/5/59, 97-98 – Oral history recordings of people from Latheron
Publication:	-
Notes:	-
Date of catalogue:	May 2023

Ref.	Description	Dates
P993	The MacLeod Collection	1874-1920
P993/1	Diaries of David MacLeod, Latheron	1874-1892
P993/1/1	Diary of David MacLeod, Latheron (1 volume) [the diary begins with a detailed description of the author's family tree titled 'My Fore Father's By My Father's Side' and ends with extensive notes by niece Laura MacLeod Steven, in blue ink, giving more detail on the family tree]	1874-1880
P993/1/2	Diary of David MacLeod, Latheron (1 volume) [the inside cover contains a member's ticket for the Caithness Land Law Reform Association]	1881-1885

P993/1/3	Diary of David Macleod, Latheron (1 volume) [there are pressed flowers on pages 31 and 32. There are also notes, in blue ink, at the end of the diary by niece Laura MacLeod Steven]	1886-1892
P993/2	Diary of John MacLeod, Latheron	1909-1920
P993/2/1	Diary of John MacLeod, Latheron (1 volume)	1909-1920