



The Tartan



Journal of the
Clan MacDougall Society of North America

Volume 58, No. 1

Visit us at www.MacDougall.org

Apr 2024

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- The Iain Ciar Targe
- Mary McDowell

IN THIS ISSUE

The MacDougall Aisle at Kilbride	1
The Iain Ciar Targe	3
President's Report	6
MacDougall / MacDowall Books	7
The "Force" that was Mary McDowell	9

The MacDougall Aisle at Kilbride



Here you see the grave of Iain Ciar, an important Clan MacDougall Chief during the early 1700s. Iain Ciar means "Dark John" in Gaelic, which gives us a clue to this intriguing Chief's appearance. His stone grave slab was engraved with three images:

1. the torch, a symbol of knowledge;
2. the sand timer, a symbol of time, and
3. the crossbones, a symbol of death.

Together they visually remind the onlooker (in the words engraved on a later MacDougall grave located nearby just outside the Burial Aisle itself) that:

*"My time is run and thine is running.
Death is sure and Judgment coming."*

During the resurgence of the Jacobite movement, Iain Ciar supported the efforts of the exiled Stewart kings to return to the ancient throne which they had lost in William of Orange's Glorious Revolution in 1688 and the subsequent 1690 Battle of the Boyne in Ireland. When the exiled kings made landings in Scotland, Iain Ciar and the Earl of Mar (known as "Bobbing John" because he had a habit of changing sides) co-led the Clan MacDougall contingents during their Jacobite uprising of 1715 and its inconclusive Battle of



MacDougall Aisle (cont)

Sheriffmuir, before being forced as a rebel to go on the run to Ireland and then France. Iain Ciar briefly returned to Scotland in 1719 to fight at the short and unsuccessful Battle of Glen Shiel before fleeing to exile again. During his ten year absence from Dunollie, his wife Mary MacDonald of Sleat and their children were put out of their home at Dunollie Castle and forced to endure a meagre existence in a little house on the island of Kerrera.

In 1727 Iain Ciar was pardoned and the couple were allowed to return to their ransacked Dunollie Castle and be together again. In 1737 Iain Ciar died and was buried at Kilbride where he was later joined by his wife Mary. Following his death, the MacDougall Chief's family created the rectangular family burial ground surrounding the graves of the couple with an arch at its entrance. The current structure dates from 1786 and to this day the site has remained significant to the Clan MacDougall as the burial ground of members of the Chief's family and the Gallanach family branch. Many MacDougalls have been laid to rest beyond the arch of this ancient burial site at Kilbride, which had once been the site of a large medieval church dedicated to St Bridget (though the ruined Presbyterian Prayer House which now stands beside the arch dates from 1706).

In 2015, this ancient site of Kilbride Church became the registered charity, "Friends of



Kilbride", with volunteers actively working to raise funds and preserve its history. During the year 2024 all interested parties are getting

together to try and raise funds to initially make safe, then consolidate, the walls of the MacDougall Burial Aisle to a condition similar to the other restored areas of the site.

To find out more about Kilbride, visit its website at www.friendsofkilbride.scot.

Clansmen attending the 2024 Clan MacDougall Gathering will be able to visit Kilbride and explore its mysteries as one of the available tours. It is always a very popular destination and you will receive a warm welcome from the volunteers who care for historic Kilbride.



The Iain Ciar Targe

By John Dowdle (COL USA RET)

The Iain Ciar targe is one of two targes owned by the 22nd Chief of the Clan MacDougall, John MacDougall (1695-1737), who is better known as Iain Ciar. Ciar possibly carried the original targe into battle at Sheriffmuir in 1715, and possibly at the Battle of Glenshiel in 1719. Along with the 'Dunollie' targe, this targe was hidden after the Act of Proscription in 1746, where both targes were used as the tops of butter urns until rediscovered in the late 1800s. Both original targes are in the Dunollie museum today and are considered excellent surviving examples of the Highland targe as well as superb examples of decorative pieces of art. We focus today on the Iain Ciar targe.



So, what is a targe? A targe (or target) was a type of shield carried by Scottish warriors from the early-1600s to the mid-1700s. It was carried along with the Scottish broadsword, dirk, musket, and pistol. The targe is descended from earlier and larger period Viking shields, with its earliest origins found in ancient Greek warfare. Both Highland and Lowland clans carried targes, but lowlander targes were not as ornately decorated or in the style of the Highland targe. Highland targes were much more associated with their clan chiefs (Source: Graeme Biggerstaff, Alba Targes). But used in conjunction with the broadsword, targes were used effectively in battles during earlier periods of the Jacobite rebellions. There has been discussion about why Highlanders still carried shields (targes) after every other European military force had long stopped carrying shields. This was attributed to the increasing acceptance of muskets and gunpowder changing battlefield tactics. However, recent experimental archeology tests have shown that there may have been a 'method to the madness' (See the web link for the Targe Live Experiment at the end of the article).

Recent experimental testing using replica period targes found that targes at distances greater than 35 yards could, in some instances, deflect or even stop musket balls held at an acute angle. More surprisingly, targes could, even at

The Clan MacDougall Society of North America

President: Misha Lowther president@macdougall.org
Tanist: Vacant tanist@macdougall.org
Tartan Editor: Scott MacDougall editor@macdougall.org
Assoc Editor: Malcolm MacDougall mpmacd@yahoo.com
John McDowall john.d.mcdowall@gmail.com
Treasurer: Dana Chandler treasurer@macdougall.org

For more information: www.macdougall.org



MacDowall

The Iain Ciar Targe (cont)

very close range, stop a ball from a flintlock pistol. This may explain in some measure the tactic of the Highland Charge. Highlanders would fire their muskets at just beyond 35-40 yards into English ranks, then throw their muskets away after the 1st volley to quickly close on their enemy with targe and broadsword before the enemy could reload their muskets.

Most period targes were made with two layers of soft wood panel boards laid crosswise with dowels, then overlaid with leather and brass-headed nails and sized anywhere from 18-21 inches in diameter. Recent testing demonstrated that some historical targes also had a layer of wool stretched in between the two board layers to add to the tensile strength to the targe. Field tests show soft wood absorbed the energy from a musket or pistol ball better than hard wood, which could splinter and become 'wooden shrapnel' going into a Highlander's arm or body. See the You Tube video link on the next page reference a live fire field test with muskets and pistols balls against several types of modern replica targes.

As with other weapons throughout history, those with the financial means or "coin" could pay to have their weapons made to high artistic standards, commissioning a work of art as well. A targe is no exception. As a Clan Chief, Iain Ciar would want to demonstrate his high rank, and his personal weapons were one means of expressing his status. According to Graeme Biggerstaff at Alba Targes in Scotland, the Iain Ciar targe "is a stunning design and a fantastic example of an elaborately designed targe for a Clan Chieftain."

One MacDougall story has it that Iain Ciar kidnapped a Campbell blacksmith in 1715 to make his weaponry, putting him to work in a cave at the base of Dunollie Castle. Today the cave is known as Blacksmith's Rock. There is conjecture that the blacksmith may have made or had a hand in making this targe, but no one knows for sure.

Graeme Biggerstaff of Alba Targes in Scotland specializes in making custom replicas of Highland targes, and he recently made a replica of the Iain Ciar targe

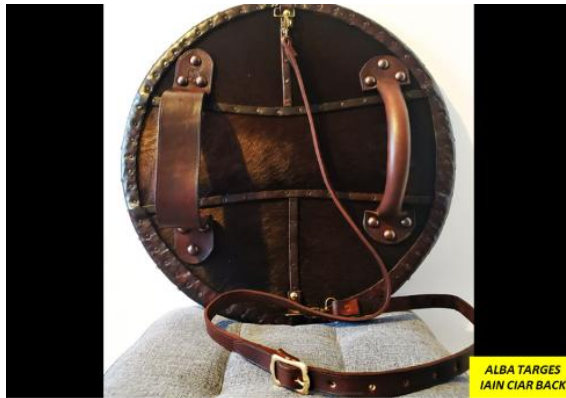


Alba Targes of Scotland Iain Ciar Replica (left) and original Iain Ciar Targe (right)

for the author. The original Iain Ciar targe was around a 21-inch diameter, the Alba targe replica diameter is 19.5 inches. Otherwise, the replica is an exact copy of the original. Decorations consist of tooled, raised leather designs in a series of concentric circles outlined by mouldings, enhanced by studs and nail-heads of brass. The central boss is a circle divided into six radii of nail-heads, filled alternatively with a trefoil and quadruped designs. Around this are eighteen triangular spaces, with nine spaces that impinge upon the inner circle. The second band is divided into six oblong compartments filled with leafy patterns and

The Iain Ciar Targe (cont)

interlaced work. The outermost band is broader than the other bands and is divided into twelve semicircular spaces, each filled with a non-descript



Alba targe Iain Ciar with a cow hide backing.
Made to be carried in the left hand.
The carry strap is a modern add-on.



ORIGINAL IAIN CIAR
DUNOLLIE CASTLE
BACK OF TARGE
DALRIADA TARTAN
BACKGROUND

The red cloth on the targe back indicates this targe was likely used in battle, as Highlanders would cut up the red uniform of dead or captured English soldiers and attach it on the back of their targes as a trophy. The Dalriada tartan (background) was (re)-discovered in 2010. it was woven in the early 18th century, pre-dating modern clan tartans.

animal. The backing of the original targe has red cloth (from uniform of an English soldier?), other period targes had a cowhide backing, like the modern replica. Graeme Biggerstaff at Alba Targes said this is one of the most complex historical targe designs he has ever had to re-create; it was very labor intensive.

So, in the future, when you see historical Highland targes in museums, on display, or even well-made modern replicas carried at Highland games, you can see them as not just part of a Highland warrior's arsenal, but in many instances superb works of the artisan's craft.

Book Sources

Campbell, Lord Archibald. (2016/1969: reprint of 1899 book) Highland dress, arms, and equipment. Germany: Hansebooks 2016; London: Dawsons of Pall Mall/1969: both editions, pages 78-82.

Notes on two Highland Targets, from Dunollie Castle, near Oban, Argyleshire. Proceedings of the Society of Antiquities of Scotland, Volume 27, pages 34-37, published 30 November 1893, <http://journals.socantscot.org/index.php/psas/article/download/6504/6473/>.

Pictures and Screenshots

- 1 - Alba Targes-Graeme Biggerstaff https://www.etsy.com/market/alba_targes
- 2 - Dun Ollaigh-A Great Stronghold-Castle Film (The Draper's Shop, Oban, Scotland) <https://www.thedrapersshop.org/product/d-n-ollaigh-a-great-stronghold-castle-film/598?cs=true&cst=custom>

Other Web Links of Interest

- 1 - Dalriada tartan <https://www.thedrapersshop.org/s/stories/the-dalriada-tartan-a-dunollie-plaid>
- 2 - History of the Targe (You Tube) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNgpl0NH65g>
- 3 - Targe Live Fire Experiment (You Tube)-Is a Highland Targe Bulletproof? (Features Alba Targes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1kdBDNnd3U>
- 4 - Highland Charge (You Tube) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ee1ZhqQTOCI>

President's Report

It's been busy at the office, so-to-speak. We are closing up the fall fundraiser and getting ready for Games all across North America. I am so ready to be outdoors and feel the sun on my face. Being outside in nature is one of my happy places. It soothes my soul.



On a personal note, my husband took me to a local museum that opened in February. It's been spread all over Facebook. It's called "Van Gough: The Immersive Experience." Art is amazing, refreshing, exhilarating, and soul-soothing as well. Reading about the life of Van Gough was interesting. I don't think I have ever read so much on him as I did that Saturday night. They have a room that shows nothing but one painting at a time fading into another painting. These works cover the entire room as though the painting is all there is. Hence "the immersive experience." After that, there is also a VR Tour that you can take. The VR tour is done in the style of Van Gough's art but it is 3D as though you truly are walking from one place to another. You can look up and see the stars, down and see the floor. Look left and right and you will see rooms with Van Gough paintings on the walls, people from his art in conversation....it is art within art in 3D. It would be interesting to see what that kind of technological art could do for a Burns Night, don't you think?

Art is amazing in whatever form it takes: music, poetry, song, painting, movement, dance. I hope each of you will enjoy the art we have on display at the Highland Games and Festivals happening this summer. Our athletes train hard as do our pipers, drummers, dancers, and crafters. We love celebrating our heritage and traditions in the arts, both physical and in print. Let us know what Games you visit. Send in photos to our Editors, Lindsay and Scott, of your visits to our Games Agents at the festivals. Share your stories of travels and the art you witness there. Tell us how our Games agents are doing and what they are sharing with you. These are the memories we hold dear as time passes.

Our Games Representatives work hard to help you enjoy your visit too. Be sure to see what we share with you as well in our Tartan and Raven editorials. If you're missing an issue, don't forget to access the Members Only portion of our website for back issues. ALL of our issues of The Tartan newsletter since 1965, the time of our inception, are available online there. I know there is plenty of art, history and heritage to share there. You might even find some information you have been seeking.

Happy reading. Happy travels this Games Season. Don't forget to make travel arrangements for the International Gathering in Oban, Argyl, Scotland this summer!

Yours Truly,

Misha Lowther, CMSNA President

[Email Misha](#)

[Donations](#)

[Visit Website](#)

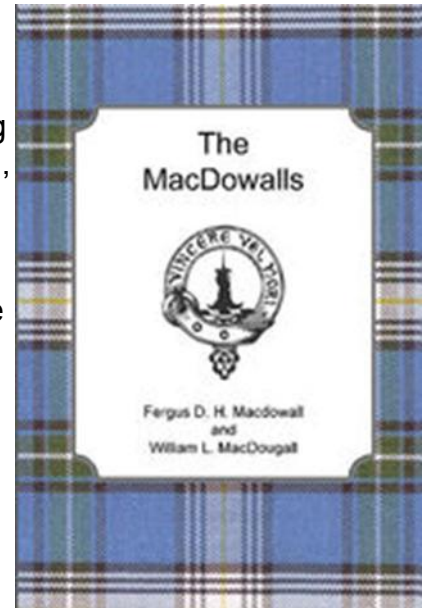
MacDougall / MacDowall Books

If you are looking for gift items related to your clan, our web site has a Book Section describing the best books about Clan MacDougall and Clan MacDowall. Each book description includes suggestions where to purchase the book, its approximate cost, and whether the profits are directed to the preservation of the clan heritage. As a Society member you have password access to our Books Section containing the complete list is at <https://macdougall.org/members/books>. Here are four suggestions suitable to the beginners as well as the experts on your gift list.

The MacDowalls by Fergus D. H. Macdowall and Contributors

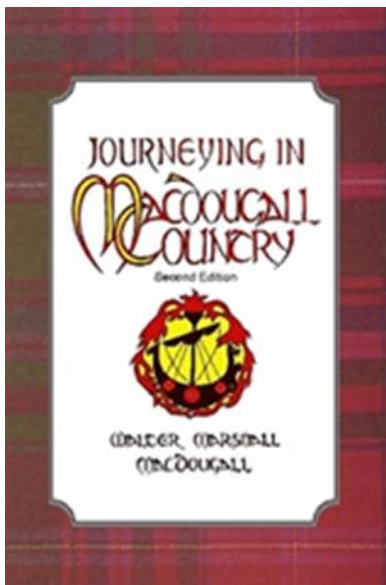
The MacDowalls traces glories, tragedies, and accomplishments of the MacDowall kindred from their beginnings in Scotland and Ireland and their emigrations. The Macdowall kindred includes many spelling variations of the surname including McDowell, MacDowel, Macdowal, MacDowyl, McDuyll, Macdoual, MacDool, McDoll, Macdougall – the original ancient name of the MacDowalls as well as Coyle, Dole, Dowall, Dugal, Dugle, Duwall, Duvall, M'Gowall, and Kyle. This is perhaps the first book ever to attempt to give a broad overview of the MacDowalls and some of their accomplishments over the past 900 years. Fergus D. H. Macdowall Chief of the Name has directed that all profits from the sale of this book are to be held in Trust by the Clan MacDougall Society of North America to be used for promoting the heritage of Clan MacDowall.

The MacDowalls may be purchased through Lulu.com for the soft cover price of \$19.00 plus shipping. Your local bookstore can order it for you; but may ask for the ISBN 978-0-578-02679-4. Major outlets such as amazon.com may offer it at their own prices.



Journeying in MacDougall Country by Walter M. Macdougall

This is a descriptive travelogue of that grand Highland countryside which was home to our MacDougall ancestors. If you are planning a visit to Dunollie or the ancient clan lands in Lorn, or Argyll or want to learn more about them, you should read this book or bring it with you as a travel guide. Its extensive notes on Clan history, geographic features, maps, sketches and historical anecdotes are designed to enrich a journey in the land of Lorn. The author, Past President Walter M. Macdougall has visited the places of our clan, researched our history, and met with the people who are most knowledgeable about the area. The book contains a special section called "The Lore of Lorn" where additional information is provided for those searching for more details on the topics. Walter has directed that all profits from the sale of this book are to be donated to the Dunollie Preservation Trust. This book may be purchased through



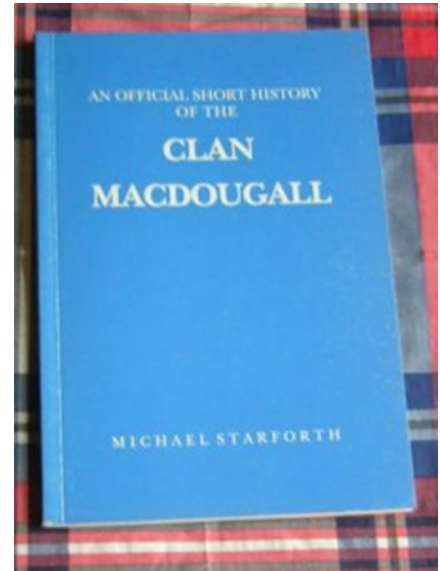
MacDowall

MacDougall / MacDowall Books (cont)

Lulu.com at a soft cover price of \$24.95 plus shipping. Also your local bookstore can order it for you but may ask for the ISBN 978-0-6151-7789-2. Major outlets such as amazon.com may offer it at their own prices.

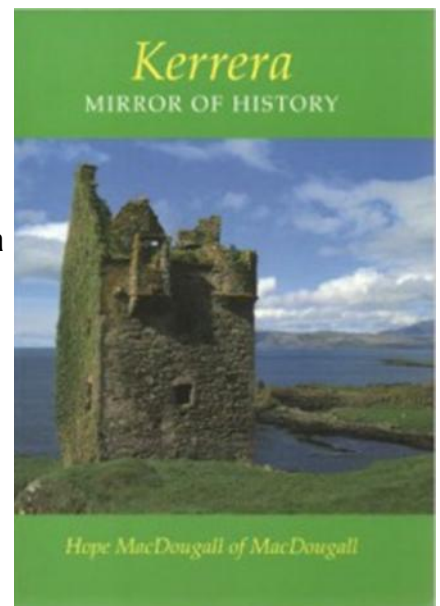
Official Short History of The Clan MacDougall by Michael Starforth

This excellent little book of 50 pages was written for our thirtieth Chief and her family members by a professional historian as an official and a definitive source on MacDougall history. It covers our clan origins, the rise and fall in power, the Scottish Wars of Independence, the relations with the Stewarts, the Jacobite wars, and our Chiefs through eight hundred and fifty years. The ISBN is 0-912951-02-8. This book has recently been republished by Unicorn Ltd. in the US. They may be contacted by email at Mcleod@scotpress.com to inquire about price and availability. This little book it is well worth reading because its contents are historically reliable. this book is also available at for The Old Drapers Shop at Dunollie Castle in Oban, Scotland and from its web page on <https://www.thedrapersshop.org/s/shop> for a price £3.99 plus shipping.



Kerrera: Mirror of History by Hope MacDougall

An intimate history of a MacDougall island and its people. This is a book about how our clan's people lived and the events which occurred on an island which has been a clan MacDougall island for most of the past 900 years. It contains descriptions of such things as tools, properties, old agricultural methods, old crafts, as well as information about Gylen Castle, and tenant records of people who lived on this island. This book is sometimes available from book sellers such as amazon.com but it is also available at The Old Drapers Shop at Dunollie Castle in Oban, Scotland and from its web page on <https://www.thedrapersshop.org/s/shop> for a price of £11.99 plus shipping.



The "Force" that was Mary McDowell (1854-1936)

By Gayle Crosby MacDowell and Scott MacDougald

Mary E. McDowell was kin of Uchtred MacDowall, 8th of Garthland in Galloway through his more recent descendant, Ephriam McDowell, who sailed on the ship George and Anne from Ireland to Pennsylvania in 1729 with some of his children and grandchildren seeking a life of freedom in the American Colonies. (The MacDowalls, p. 53.) Her father, Malcolm, served in the United States Army and reached the rank of Major. He served at the Battle of Bull Run as an aide-de-camp to his brother, Major General Irvin McDowell, the commander in charge. Their brother, John Adair McDowell, was a Colonel with the 6th Iowa Volunteer Infantry Regiment who led a brigade at the Battle of Shiloh.



The "Force"

The 'force' inside Mary McDowell, was woven into her DNA. 'It' had a reason, meaning and purpose and – if allowed to express itself fully – her service to humanity would be great indeed. Mary McDowell was free to embrace or ignore the 'force', to fulfill her own destiny or be less than she could be. One day that force would make her famous as the "Angel of the Stock Yards."

Mary As a Child

As a child, Mary grew up in a big house with servants and laborers who worked in her family home and at her father's nearby steel mill. The children of the household staff and employees of the mill were her friends and many were her playmates at her one-room school. She was eager, and even encouraged, to work side by side with her family's domestic help, loving the stories of their different cultures and appreciating the warmth of their care. Mary's love for people was all inclusive.



A turning point came when Mary was 12 years old and living near Chicago. Mary's father, whom she loved and respected, owned a steel mill. As was befitting his status and wealth, Malcolm McDowell and his family attended the well-to-do Episcopal church while his workers, many having come from Ireland and Scotland, attended a little Methodist Chapel. He saw in these men and their families a relationship with God and a work ethic which he greatly admired. The next action Malcolm McDowell would take would energize the 'force' within Mary and create a lifelong pattern. To the community's astonishment, he left the Episcopal Church and joined his workmen at the unpretentious Methodist Chapel. Mary's response was to follow her father. To those who were shocked, Mary simply replied, "if father is going to heaven, so am I." Later Mary would continue that pattern by living, not in luxury, but within the very community she was



MacDougall

Mary McDowell (cont)

charged to help by applying the Methodist approach of caring people methodically bettering themselves and their community over long periods of time.

The Great Chicago Fire, 1871

Mary was 17 when the first cries of “fire” raced through the city of Chicago. As the raging flames consumed everything in sight, Mary knew she had no choice but to help rescue the fleeing citizens. Knowing her father was ill and unable to assist, she begged him to let her take their horse and wagon to save as many as possible. Governor Rutherford B. Hayes, an old friend of the McDowells, rushed aid and supplies to the McDowell home for distribution to the makeshift tent



Image: Currier and Ives

and shanty town thrown up by the displaced people. Mary proved she was a good organizer and when Rutherford Hayes became President, Mary was invited to spend a month at the White House where she helped them move in.

Twenties and Thirties

In her twenties and thirties Mary put her efforts into teaching at the Methodist Church, joined the Women’s Christian Temperance Union and completed a National Kindergarten course. At age 38, she joined her friend and mentor, Jane Addams, in an experimental social project called Hull House which Jane had recently established in old General Mills mansion in an industrialized section of Chicago. It was turned into a ‘Settlement House’ dedicated to learning how to better the living conditions of the poor in the days before social workers. Mary’s work there created a successful kindergarten program which laid the foundation for her next crucial step.

The University of Chicago Settlement Project

In 1894 faculty members at the recently formed University of Chicago, interested in determining the causes behind poverty and the suffering working class, formed the University of Chicago Settlement Project with goals similar to Jane Addams’ successful Hull House. During their search for someone to lead the project, Jane brought Mary McDowell to their attention. They offered her the position and she enthusiastically accepted. The powerful ‘force’ within Mary was gathering steam as she turned her attention to the stockyards neighborhood and its meatpacking industry which so cruelly treated its immigrant workers.

Throwing Down the Gauntlet

Mary McDowell (cont)

In her McDowell family home, the influential gathered and dined to discuss the issues of the day. We can imagine Mary, celebrating her new position with the University, seated next to her father. She watched as he stood up at the head of his elegantly arrayed dining table hosting Chicago's elite. McDowell validated his argument by throwing down the 'gauntlet' amidst the fine China and wine glasses. His voice was strong as he claimed that Philip Danforth Armour was responsible in great part for the problem! They talked more and more of the growing desperation and anger of the working class who suffered from low pay, unlimited work hours, and horrible working conditions. The 1894 Pullman Strike against Pullman and Armour had been an unmitigated disaster for the neighborhood. Afterwards the beaten down labor movement was unable to help them.

Philip Danforth Armour, Chicago Meatpacking Tycoon

The March 1999 issue of Classic Chicago Magazine told the story of the wealthy Philip Danforth Armour who created the unhealthy and unsanitary working conditions of immigrant employees and their families, desperate for jobs, who had to live in poor housing on the very low wages he paid. While Armour's advanced technology in meatpacking revolutionized the industry and brought jobs, he allowed garbage, waste and effluent discharged from the slaughtering, butchering, and packaging processes to pollute the water in "Bubbly Creek." Its decaying matter and waste chemicals bubbled to the surface, filling the Packingtown neighborhood with a terrible stench. The continuing outcry for Philip Armour to "do something about it" fell on deaf ears – creating a swell of fear, frustration, and anger among those barely eking out a living working in the stockyards and packing plants. Each day many men and women would line up at the meat packers' factory gates in the hope of being chosen for a days' work as a dayworker, but about 5,000 would be left outside. It was into this filthy maelstrom that Mary plunged.

Mary's First Day of Work

Mary established her Chicago Settlement House in the Packingtown neighborhood called the "Back of the Yards." On the 2nd floor, in the rear of a tenement building on Gross Avenue behind the Union Stockyards, she rented 4 rooms with gaslights, an iron stove and no running water. Then she moved in with the intention of becoming a helpful neighbor to the people of the growing area which then held about 30,000 people – not knowing that she would be so successful that one day the street would be renamed McDowell Ave in her honor.

The Packingtown neighborhood of her small Settlement House lay between Armour's stockyards and the land given over to the Chicago city dump for untreated garbage and refuse – a haven for rats that spread disease in the community and a source of constant distress to the neighborhood. The stench of the slaughterhouse and fire pits hovered over the community like a cloud and pervaded everything it touched. Houses had no grass and garbage littered the area while children had no places to play except in the streets, alleys and railroad tracks that ran through the area.

In the early morning hours, Mary stood looking out the window of her new home 'Back of the Yards', at the seemingly hopeless situation to which she had just dedicated herself. The words she had memorized



MacDowall

Mary McDowell (cont)

and delivered to the University upon receiving her new position came back to her now. In the cold of the morning, she uttered them aloud.

“I believe that God has made of one blood all nations of men, and that we are his children, brothers, and sisters all. We want to be true citizens of this, our city, and therefore will show our love for her by our words. Chicago does not ask us to die for her welfare; she asks us to live for her good, so to live and to act that her government may be pure, her officers honest, and every home within her boundaries be a fit place to grow the best kind of men and women to rule over her.” Source: Mary McDowell (1854 – 1936): Founder of the University of Chicago Settlement House and co-founder of the National Women’s Trade Union League (2014). Social Welfare History Project. Retrieved March 7, 2024, from <https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/people/mcdowell-mary/>

Mary silently nodded her head in affirmation of her own words. It was then she determined to become one of ‘them’. She would inspire them, laugh and cry with them, and fight for their rights. She had indeed chosen the right path... if she could manage the horrendous smell.

The Settlement House... Mary’s Place of Hope

Mary began her work in the four small rooms and the surrounding grounds by creating a day care where working mothers could be assured their children were well cared for. Her work with children brought her into contact with their families and step by step led her to establish training classes to teach them how to meet their own needs. Mary established a community garden where the women could plant vegetables, and a Woman’s Club where the women of the ‘Back of Yards’ could support each other, share their concerns and find life-giving moments of companionship and laughter.

That was only the beginning; she would teach them to be ‘environmental-rights’ soldiers as well. Mary created classes on hygiene and cleanliness and stimulated people to clean up their homes – and then gradually the surroundings outside of them were cleaned too. With no running water in homes to bathe in, the group waged a skirmish against the unsanitary conditions by sending a petition to the City Fathers calling for a public bath house. Cheers went up all around when the city agreed! Thus, with Mary’s help, for the first time the Packingtown community, once powerless, knew and experienced a small sense of political power.

Armour Is Pushed... And He Pushes Back

Phillip Armour’s perception of his meatpacking gold mine began with the idea that Americans want all the meat they can eat for cheap. Armour considered the human worker as simply a part of his ‘packing machine process.’ At that time there were no labor laws in Chicago. Armour ‘was the law’ in Packingtown. Whatever he determined was necessary to create an abundance of meat at a low cost justified any means of getting it.

Despite Mary’s heroic efforts, poverty, the true cause of her neighbor’s suffering, had not been addressed – but the outcry remained constant and deafening. Now Armour had a full-blown public relations problem on his hands. Instead of fixing the real problem, Armour decided to fund Chicago’s Armour Mission, a Southside Sunday School for children. His

Mary McDowell (cont)

parting words to the project went something like this: I don't care if the congregants are baptized in the soup bowl, the dish pan or the Chicago River, I'm just a butcher trying to go to heaven.

When the cries for change became louder, Armour spent a million dollars to found the Armour Institute of Technology which would later become the prestigious Illinois Institute of Technology. How galling it must have been for his workers to know of Armour's daily ritual of walking around the city attired in wealth with a wad of new one hundred \$1.00 bills in his hand. Those who pleased him were handed a \$1.00 bill. Now and then he graciously honored some poor soul with a new suit. Armour's perception of himself and his generosity would be disputed by his workers, their families and the public in general.

'Angel of the Stock Yards'

To the Packingtown community and social reformers, Mary McDowell was an Angel. To Armour, the officials of the City of Chicago, and those who turned a blind eye to 'man's inhumanity to man' for financial gain or out of apathy, Mary was a nuisance. 'They' allowed her to make life better in Packingtown: implement the Civic Improvement Association; create parks; and expand her Settlement House to include educational facilities, a lending library, free Sunday concerts, music and artistic programs. She could fundraise among the wealthy to her heart's content to help the struggling families of Packingtown, but a line would surely be drawn if she sought to insert herself in the meatpacking industry itself.

All was well until one day in 1900 when labor organizer Michael Donnelly, a butcher himself, came to the Back of the Yards bringing with him his message of collective bargaining and social justice. His first attempts brought workers a few more cents, improved their working conditions a bit, and lifted their morale. Mary observed this and supported Donnelly, and he supported her. Mary had always known the root cause of her neighbors' suffering was to be found in Armour's exploitative system, his perception of humanity, and his power to operate the Chicago meatpacking industry as he wished. Unionization was a risk but it was a means to real change.

Mary McDowell's Pink Tea Strike

Mary and Michael Donnelly joined forces to create one of the few unions of women. The Amalgamated Meat Cutter and Butcher Workmen of America: Local 183 to cooperate with the male dominated unions. At their unions' May 1904 convention, the delegates proposed raising the unskilled worker pay level to 25 cents per hour from 18. Armour countered their proposal with a wage cut back to the 15 cents per hour it had been before Donnelly arrived. The cry to 'Strike' was heard in Packingtown as 1,500 women quietly walked off the job to join the twenty thousand men striking. The strike began with such order, peace, and calm the public called it Mary McDowell's Pink Tea Strike. This time the settlement workers advised by Mary and her colleagues and the labor leaders kept violence to a minimum, unlike the previous failed strikes of 1886 and 1896.

When incidents did occur the newspapers seized on them for headlines but Mary wrote articles for the newspapers and



MacDougall

Mary McDowell (cont)

magazines to counteract the publicity and to explain the reasons for the strike and describing the deplorable conditions that need to be remedied in the Stockyards community. The Settlement House also provided meals and residence to other writers who were publicizing the conditions of the area – among those who ate and debated with them as a member of the writers at the Settlement House was Upton Sinclair whose subsequent novel, *The Jungle*, included their input. It would soon afterwards stir a national reform of the meat industry and its sanitation practices.

But Armour took a hard line, brought in strike-breakers, and waited out the strikers until they nearly starved. No longer able to continue the strike, the leaders called upon Mary McDowell to help them come to a settlement with no gains but without just surrendering. She arranged a meeting with Armour, and he agreed the owners would negotiate with a union committee to end the strike by taking back the labor leaders, but without pay increases. There had been no gains but for once the unions had saved face and had not been beaten out of existence – the reform movement would live on. Mary's public response was, "the strike failed but the cause of the unskilled and underpaid is not dead. It will keep forcing itself to the surface because it deals with the question of the standard of living."

We can only imagine how Mary felt as stinging tears fell from her eyes as she looked out that same window of her Packingtown home, the smelly smoke rising as it always had from the burning waste pits. Mary sighed deeply. It would take time for her mind to be open to something new again. But one day, soon after, Mary realized something very important. While the plight of women in the workforce contained the ordinary labor problems the unions were trying to solve, the challenge for them was infinitely greater! The 'force' within Mary gave her a bold idea!

The White House

During the strike the President T.R. Roosevelt had read two articles about the conditions, one of which was written by Mary McDowell. He sent the article to his head of the Department of Commerce and Labor and asked him to investigate the conditions. Pressed and dressed Mary gathered her friend Jane Addams and the two went to the White House for a personal visit with President Theodore Roosevelt. 'Angel of the Stock Yards', 'Fighting Mary', 'Garbage Lady' and 'Duchess of Bubbly Creek', sat before the President of the United States and explained a simple, self-evident truth. For working men, the disease, death, destruction, and disruption of their lives was tied to the unjust labor practices and poor working environment, created by powerful business owners with similar perspectives as Armour. For women, however, it was worse as they were expected to bear children, care for the family home and work at the same time under the same unhealthy conditions as men. With that, Mary asked Roosevelt for his support in launching a Congressional Investigation into all aspects of the working woman. Roosevelt agreed but when the report came out in January 1905 it did not focus on the conditions of the worker as Mary had hoped. It only mentioned the benefits of the work the unions had done – so it had little impact.

Then in late 1905 Upton Sinclair's novel, *The Jungle*, came out. Suddenly thousands of Americans became concerned about the quality of their meat but not the conditions of the

Mary McDowell (cont)

workers. Again, the President ordered an investigation but before the investigators went to work, he called Mary McDowell to Washington to learn if Upton Sinclair's book was true. She said his book was true, but it did contain some exaggerations. When he received the report, he kept it secret for fear of what it would do to the industry, but he used to convince the packers to support a reform bill calling for inspections of meat packing plants. Then he learned from Mary the packers had cleaned up their plants prior to a visit by congressional members but denied doing so. This angered the President so much that he released the previously secret report on June 4, 1906, and galvanized the public support for reform of the industry. On June 30, 1906, Roosevelt signed the first comprehensive federal food safety laws in American history: The Meat Inspection Act and The Pure Food and Drug Act.

Mary would go on for almost another thirty years expending great efforts to improve people's lives. Mary has passed now of course. She had a paralyzing stroke on October 14th, 1936, and was buried at Rose Hill Cemetery next to her parents. Though she received honors at home and abroad, perhaps the finest tribute to her was made at a memorial service held by her neighbors in the Back of The Stockyards. The words of a proud Irish woman who had known her since her arrival 45 years before said it best: "Oh, how I loved that woman."

Wonderings

It occurred to me just now as I write this article, that as Gayle Crosby MacDowell, Mary and I are woven together in some distant way in the blue and white tartan of Clan MacDowall. How strange... Mary founded the Women's Trade Union League of Chicago and lobbied the U.S. government to establish the Women's Bureau to study living and working conditions of women and children in 1920... and I'm writing about it. But Mary did so much more! There is not enough space in five years of Tartan's to tell of her many contributions to the men, women and children of this world...all whom she would consider her 'kin'. I think I agree with Jane Addams when she said, "Mary was God-Driven".

Knowing her, just a little, makes me wonder if the 'Force' in Mary's DNA is alive in me? If it is, I wonder what I will do with it?

Reading List and References

Mary McDowell and Municipal Housekeeping (Available to read for free online at archive.org.)

Mary McDowell, Neighbor, Howard E. Wilson

The Jungle, Upton Sinclair's historic expose of the Chicago Stockyards

The MacDowalls, Fergus D.H. Macdowall and William L. MacDougall p. 53

The Social Settlement and Civic Responsibility – The life work of Mary McDowell and Graham Taylor, Lea D. Taylor

The Union Stockyards <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gXCox7oAI>

Women Who Changed Things Nine Lives that Made a Difference by Linda S. Peavy, and Ursula Smith (Available to read for free at archive.org.)



MacDougall

Clan MacDougall Society of North America



MacDowall

Reference information for Society members

Get the most out of your membership!

About Your Society

As a registered 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit, CMSNA depends on the financial contributions of our members to fulfill our “literary, historical, and educational” purposes. The Society connects 750 clanfolk like you who want to celebrate, share and preserve our proud legacy. We rely on volunteers and no one receives compensation for their efforts.

The Value of Membership

Membership is rewarding and loyalty is widespread. More than 40-percent are 25-year contributors and nearly 300 have become Life Members. Your contributions are tax deductible in the U.S. Membership is on a calendar year basis and members must make a minimum yearly contribution of \$25 by December 31st to remain active. Life Memberships are also available. The minimum contribution only covers our basic operating expenses and allows you to enjoy our popular newsletters and special Society events that help build lasting relationships. Contributions in excess of the \$25 minimum make a significant difference in our funding for scholarships, historic site preservation and new programs. Please consider contributing above the minimum, because there's so much more we can accomplish.

Renewing Your Annual Membership is Easy

Make your annual renewal online by December 31st for the coming calendar year online through PayPal at: <https://macdougall.org/paypal/> or by postal mail to our Treasurer

Stay Connected, Join the Conversation

Visit our web site at www.macdougall.org

Visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/262542704399201>

Follow us on Twitter at https://twitter.com/Clan_MacDougall

Keep Your Contact Information Current

Report changes to your email, postal address or telephone number(s) to:

records@macdougall.org

Or mail your changes to:

VP for Membership Valerie McDougall, 505-470 Scenic Dr, London, ON Canada N5Z 3B2

Mail hard copy Applications, Contributions or other forms to:

Clan MacDougall Society of North America, c/o Misha Lowther, President, 1701 S. Main St, P.O. Box 1185, Broken Arrow, OK 74013

Applications for Membership are available online at:

<http://www.macdougall.org/memberApp/>