

**High Mingarry (Mingaraigh Ard), Moidart, Inverness-shire  
(NM 68827 70315)**

**A survey undertaken by the Moidart History Group,  
Comann Eachdraidh Mùideart, in Spring / Summer 2008**

**Historical background and notes**

## High Mingarry (Mingearaidh Ard), Moidart



*High Mingarry viewed from the north. Bracken covers most areas of past cultivation.*

### **High Mingarry, Moidart. (NM 68800.70200)**

In historic records, the township of Mingarry appears as Mengary, Mingary and Mingarry. The original settlement was likely to have been sited to the north of the parliamentary road, at the place now known as High Mingarry where scattered ruins are evident.

Aaron Arrowsmith's Map of Scotland 1807, shows that Mingarry was some distance to the north of the proposed Parliamentary road and that a track left the route of the road to the west of the Mingarry Burn and climbed the hill in a north-easterly direction to the settlement. The track then continued over the hill to the south shore of Loch Moidart to meet the route of the road near the River Moidart crossing point at the east end of the loch.

The Lochshiel Estate Map, probably drawn up about 1811-1816 indicates that at that time the settlement of Mingarry was sited on the hillside to the north of Loch Shiel and to the north of the parliamentary road, mainly between two tributaries of the Mingarry Burn. At that time, there were no buildings near the road.

### **Historic Background**

#### **Pre 1745**

The date of origin of the township is unknown. Moidart was part of the mainland Clanranald Estates. The settlement appears in lists of Estate rentals 1691-1771 as Mengary. The rental was 142 Merks.(Clanranald Papers NAS GD201/35115/6/7)

Pre 1745 it would have consisted of an area of arable land that would have been split up between a number of tenants. A version of the run-rig system would have been in operation whereby the portions of land cultivated by individual tenants would have been reallocated each year so that plots of better or poorer land would be rotated between the tenants. The inhabitants would have lived in turf houses and the area of arable and habitation would probably have been separated from the rough hill grazing by a head dyke.

Most inhabitants would support their families by subsistence farming. Because of the poor quality of the land crops such as bere barley and oats were grown in cultivation rigs prepared by heaping up the sparse soil leaving shallow ditches between the rows. Cultivation areas were often on gentle slopes with better drainage. In Moidart it is thought that the land was cultivated by hand using the *Cas dhireach* or straight spade. (Hugh Cheape Management and mismanagement in Moidart since the Seventeenth Century). Harvesting and drying the grain would have been difficult because of the wet climate. The township would have shared a corn drying kiln although none has been found at the settlement. It seems likely that it was removed by alterations that took place in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thrashing and winnowing would have taken place in a barn or barns that would probably have had doorways in opposite walls ensuring a good through draft. The grain would have been ground in household querns. It is possible that a small local horizontal mill could have been used but there are no obvious remains of such a structure at Mingarry.

The Scottish breed of *small black cattle* were important. During the winter they were housed close to home in byres that were often next to or near dwellings. Sometimes cattle occupied one side of the main house, people and animals being separated by a partition. It was difficult to find enough fodder for the cattle through the winter and there are descriptions of cattle becoming so weak that they had to be carried from the byres in the spring (I F Grant, Highland Folk Ways). In the summer they moved to summer pastures at the shielings where they thrived on the rough hill pasture. They were accompanied by women and children who lived in roughly built shelters. Dairy work was carried out at the shielings and the butter and cheese consumed during the winter and also used to pay rents. There appear to be large numbers of sheiling hut remains on the hillside near the deserted settlement of Port a' Bhata to the north of Mingarry. Since there are no records of the settlement of Port a' Bhata until the late eighteenth century, these are likely to have been the main site of Mingarry shielings.

Sheep or goats were usually left to forage on the rough pasture surrounding the township. The fleeces were processed into yarn by the women and usually woven into cloth locally on household looms.

People wore homespun clothing and even shoes were made locally from hide. Peat was used for fuel and cooking was carried out on open peat fires sited centrally on the floor of the house.

A scrap of record in the Clanranald Papers appears to indicate that in the early eighteenth century some of the rent was still paid in kind. Butter and cheeses are mentioned as well as "wedders" (sheep). The autumn sale of cattle would have provided some cash to pay rents but it is quite possible that many local transactions would have taken place by barter rather than by using money.

Prior to 1745 life in Mingarry would have been influenced by the clan system whereby the clan chief provided land for the clansmen and held responsibility in exchange for their loyalty and military service.

Although early records for the Moidart lands of Clanranald are sparse, a 1724 list of expenses for Castle Tioram includes the item ... "Expenses for holding court and entertaining the natives...£1.16s.3d".

Although the nuance of meaning may have altered through the ages, this record probably does indicate that the author perceived a gulf between the clan chief and his clansmen. In spite of this, many of the male inhabitants of Moidart took an active part in the 1745 rising, following the son of their chieftain in support of the Jacobite cause. However, no men from Mingarry are known to have joined the forces of Prince Charles Edward Stewart. Perhaps they were following the wishes of their chieftain in withholding their support.

### **1745-1814**

Following the battle of Culloden, it was the intention of the Government to forfeit the Clanranald lands because of the involvement of the young Clanranald. This did not occur because it was eventually accepted that the Clan Chief himself had not given support to the cause but in 1748, prior to the decision, a survey of Clanranald lands was carried out for the Barons of the Exchequer. Mingarry appears as one Penny Land. The tenants were:

Archibald MacKillick -half farthing land

Hugh MacVarish-half farthing land

Donald Brown-farthing land

Roderick Macpherson-threequarters farthing land

Donald Macisaac-threequarters farthing land

Mary Macdonald-fourth part of farthing land

Mary Macvarish-fourth part of farthing land.

A "Valuation of the Lands of Moydart belonging to John MacDonald of Clanranald" was carried out in 1782 when the farms of East and West Mingarry were recorded. The rental value of East Mingarry was recorded as being £9.14s.10d, and that for West Mingarry was £9.16s.2d. Interestingly, the tenants of East Mingarry were also expected to pay kelp duty of 13s per annum. The settlement of Port a' Bhata did not appear in the record. The kelp duty confirms that at that time, the shore along the south side of Loch Moidart was part of the Mingarry lands.

By the late eighteenth century the Clanranald chiefs had abandoned their role as heritable trustees and had embraced membership of the landed gentry. Income from the Scottish estates was expected to finance lavish lifestyles in London, Edinburgh and elsewhere. An enormous source of income for the landlord was involvement in the kelp industry. Tenants were paid to collect dry and burn kelp throughout the summer months. They paid the landlord duty for the privilege of doing this and were paid relatively low sums for the product but the industry would have augmented the income of tenants of the East Mingarry farm and provided some cash. The alkaline product was shipped to the Clyde and used in the manufacture of glass and soap. The industry was particularly lucrative for the landlords during the Napoleonic wars when imported barilla was scarce. Clanranald's income was reportedly as much as £20,000 to £25,000 per annum. Little of this income appears to have been invested in the estates or used to improve the land or develop diverse industry.

By the latter part of the eighteenth century the people of Moidart were benefiting from potato crops. There is evidence that potatoes were grown in the arable land at the settlements and also in narrow lazy beds at shieling sites. The use of shieling sites for crops probably indicates an increase in the local population. Some of the former shieling sites became permanently settled and the township of Port a Bhàta had become established by about 1790. It is possible that the practice of seasonal transhumance ceased at about this time.

At the end of the seventeenth century, cattle prices were high. The annual autumn sale of cattle to the drovers who took them on to markets such as Falkirk, would have provided rent and income and in some cases may have financed emigration. Emigration from the area had started in 1772 when a group of better off tenants led by Glenaladale left for St. John's Island in Canada. Many people who could afford to do so paid their own passage either to Canada, and later Australia in the following years. It is probable that a number of families left Mingarry at the end of the eighteenth century and in the first part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Another change that occurred in the late eighteenth century was the replacement of the turf dwellings by dry stone built houses. This apparently happened at about the same time throughout the area and was probably done as a result of an edict by the landlords. The factor may have specified the size and type of house to be built since many seem to be of similar dimensions and design.

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century legislation imposing licensing, a heavy duty on whisky production and regulation of the size of stills was passed in order to put an end to the business of the small whisky producer. Whisky continued to be distilled illegally in stills hidden along the burns throughout the highlands. There was a good market for the product that was considered to be superior to that produced by the large lowland distilleries. The illegal trade flourished until after 1815 when a degree of relaxation of regulation and duties and the vigorous deployment of excisemen made the trade less profitable. The neighbouring settlement of Port a' Bhata developed a reputation for involvement in the trade, but it is possible that the inhabitants of Mingarry were also involved..

### **1814 to 1860**

The Clanranald lands were sold off in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to meet the enormous debts of Ranald (Reginald) George Macdonald of Clanranald. The lucrative kelp industry came to an end after the Napoleonic wars when foreign barilla could be imported and the development of Le Blanc process enabled industrial chemical production of alkali. Mingarry became a township of Lochshiel Estate purchased by Alexander Macdonald of Glenaladale sometime during the period from 1811-1815. An undated Map of Lochshiel Estate prepared for Alexander MacDonald of Glenaladale probably shortly after the purchase, clearly shows the route of the parliamentary road and the settlement of Mingarry consisting of 11 buildings all sited between the two main tributaries of the Mingarry burn to the north of the road. This map also indicates that the settlement was surrounded by 39.25 acres of arable land and 304.87 acres of rough hill grazing as well as having rights to a further 44.5 acres of moss to the south of the parliamentary road.

The land allotted to Port a' Bhata is clearly shown directly to the north of the Mingarry land and may have originally belonged to the Mingarry township. The border between the lands is a straight line in contrast to other borders that appear to follow natural land features.

When Alexander Macdonald of Glenaladale died Lochshiel Estate became the property of Mr. Archibald Macdonald of Rhu and on his death passed to Alexander Macdonald, who became known as Lochshiel. He was the proprietor in the 1830s and 1840s.

Estate accounts are available for the years from 1814 onwards. The records for 1814 are confusing but it is evident that the farm of Mingarry was shared between the following nine tenants: John McVarish, John McDonald, Hugh McMaster, Donald McVarish, Donald McMaster, Rory McVarish, Angus McEachern, Donald McDonald and Angus Beaton. It is clear that all the tenants were in rent arrears. The total sum owing at the time of the crop in 1814 was £31.16s.0d. The amounts owed by individual tenants varied from 15s to £7.10s.0d. The rental records for the following years are clearer. In 1816 the farm of Mingarry was let in eight equal lots at £7.10s 0d per annum for each share. There were nine tenants. Donald McDonald and Angus McEachern shared one of the lots. The other tenants each had one lot and were the same individuals as in the preceding year with two possible exceptions. The name of Hugh McMaster had been replaced by Ewen McMasrter. This may have been the same person or a relative. John McVarish was no longer listed as a tenant and his portion of the farm was being rented by an Alexander McPherson.

In 1816 the rent of each lot was reduced to £6.15s.0d per annum and remained at this level for a number of years. For the years from 1817 to 1820 the list of tenants remained the same except that Angus Beaton was replaced by his widow. By 1821 there were a few minor changes. Mingarry was still divided into eight main lots at £6.15.0d. per annum but a rental of £1 was added for "Rhue for widow Beaton's accommodation" The Beaton portion of the farm was rented by a Donald McPherson and John McDonalds lot was rented by his widow. The portion of land that had been shared by Rory McVarish and Angus McEachern was being shared by Norman McVarish and James McEachern. These changes appear to show a fairly stable situation with the tenancy of land mainly being retained within families. The fact that there were two tenants with the name of McVarish in 1748 may indicate that there had been long-term stability in that it is possible that the McVarish residents of the 1820s could have been their descendents. By 1836 the eight lots were each let at £7.0s.0d.per annum but there were fifteen tenants:

Donald McMaster and his son John McMaster	£7.0s.0d.
Donald McPherson	£7.0s.0d.
Rory McDonald and Alexander McVarish	£7.0s.0d.
John McMaster, John Ranken and Angus Macl?	£7.0s.0d.
Ewan McMaster and Donald McVarish	£7.0s.0d.
Allan McEachern, John McVarish	£7.0s.0d.
Angus McIsaac and John McIsaac	£7.0s.0d.
Ewen McPherson	£7.0s.0d.

The population of the Western Highlands steadily increased in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Mingarry farm had already been divided into Port a' Bhàta and Mingarry so that the seven tenants of 1748 had actually increased to 22 (15 in Mingarry and seven in port a' Bhàta). The difficulties encountered in supporting the growing population of Moidart on poor agricultural land were considerable. There was great dependence on the potato and there are records of some relief cargoes of meal being necessary. (On 7/7/1808 the Kinlochmoidart Estate Factor wrote that some meal was coming into the coast to enable the poor people of the area to survive in miserable circumstances until the potato harvest. Robertson Macdonald Papers NLS. M.S.3945). Every year most tenants had rent arrears. In 1838 the rent was reduced to £6 per lot in recognition of the fact that there had been a fall in cattle prices and that the tenants would not be able to pay.

Lochshiel was unable to make the Estate self supporting and in 1838 borrowed the sum of £11,000 and began a number of schemes designed to make the estate viable, such as building a fish-curing house at Dorlin.

Thirteen households were recorded in Mingarry in the 1841 census (See Appendix II). A total of 76 people lived in the settlement. The population were almost entirely dependent on the land. All adult males were recorded as being farmers or agricultural labourers with the exception of two Macdonalds who were probably brothers and who were both masons.

The difficulties were such that by the early 1840s the parish priest, Father Ranald Rankin was advocating emigration for his flock. Most, if not all, of the inhabitants of Mingarry would have been Roman Catholic. The Records of the Roman Catholic Church in Moidart start in 1832 and show a total of 7 marriages and 22 Baptisms for Mingarry inhabitants during the 1830s and 1840s (See Appendix I). A priest has noted in the margin that of the 9 couples married, two later emigrated to Australia and one to Canada. Another couple moved to Glasgow and another to Fort William.

The failure of the potato harvest in 1846 caused crisis. The decision was made to turn the estate land into large sheep farms. The neighbouring farms of Port a' Bhàta, Cliff, Blain and Briaig were advertised as sheep pasture in 1844. Rev. D. Charles Macdonald writing about forty years later (Moidart, Among the Clanranalds, Birlinn) states that "Dorlin, Scardoish, Port a' Bhata, Briaig and Mingarry were swept clean, the majority of the crofters being sent away to Australia, while a few migrated South or got the offer of settling down in less favourable localities of the estate."

Rev. D Charles Macdonald also gave evidence to the Napier Commission in 1884.

Minutes of Evidence p 2113,

After saying Lord Howard was a good landlord but unwilling to grant leases:

*33185 ..Is there not a demand for more hill pasture?*

*There has been, I may say, such a grievance in the country, but that is an old complaint. There was a part of the hill called Dorlin, which includes Breack, Mingarry and Blainardin which there was a large population at one time - this, of course, was before my time - and every one of these were removed. There was not a single tenant left on Blainard or Breack, or Port Aviort or Mingarry. I have tried to ascertain what became of them, and I found a few of them had been sent down to the Moss; one or two were sent up to Langal, but the majority, I think, were sent away to Australia.*

*33186. What about the hill pasture?*

*Three of these places are very enticing, Mingarry especially; there are the ruins of twelve cottages there. Port Aviort is also an enticing place, and well adapted for small tenants, and Breack and Blainard are more or less favourable. Naturally some of the people would like to get back there - those who have the capital to take it. If they went up there, their sons might stop in the buildings they would leave behind them.*

*13317. In whose hands are these glens at present?*

*They were put into one farm, and the tenant of that farm went away about twelve years ago, and Lord Howard took it into his own hands.*

There were still 13 households at the time of the 1851 census. Although most were farmers and agricultural labourers there were also two shoe-makers and a tailor as well as several paupers. The population totalled 66 persons. Although some of the occupant families are recognisably the same as those in the township 10 years previously, others appear to be different reflecting the upheaval of the

preceding years. Interestingly, the occupants of the households as recorded in the census do not match up with the list of Mingarry tenants.

In 1850 there were seventeen tenants in the township:

Widow of Ewen McMaster	£0.0s.0d.
Red John McMaster	£7.0s.0d
Ewen McPherson	£7.0s.0d
Angus McIsaac Senior	£3.0s.0d
John McVarish	£3.10s.0d.
John McPherson	£3.0s.0d.
Allan McEachen	£3.10s.0d.
Duncan Pherson (Shepherd)	£3.0s.0d.
Alexander McIsaac	£1.15s.0d.
Rory McDonald	£3.10s.0d.
Angus McIsaac Junior	£3.10s.0d.
Widow of John McMaster	£3.10s.0d.
Widow of John McDonald	£3.10s.0d.
Ditcher Mingarry, Angus MacDonald	£2.10s.0d.
DitcherMoss, Ronald McDonald	£3.0s.0d.
John McDonald, Gamekeeper	£3.0s.0d.
Christy McDonald	£2.5s.0d

Records of emigrant ships show that inhabitants of Moidart sailed for Australia on the Araminta in 1850, the Allison and Marco Polo in 1852 and the Hornet in 1854. Their priest, Ranald Rankin joined those of his flock that had left for Australia in 1855. The Roman Catholic congregation of Moidart had decreased by 500.

Lochshiel Estate was purchased by Mr Hope Scott in 1855.

### **Post 1860**

The new proprietor paid for the construction of a new Roman Catholic Church and Priest's House which were built just to the north of the parliamentary road at Mingarry. The Priest's House (with fourteen windows) was finished and occupied by Rev. Charles Macdonald, his sister and a young house-maid by the time of the 1861 census. The Church was consecrated in 1862. Only two other houses were listed at Mingarry. Both had only two windows and were occupied by families whose head was farming just 2 acres. These were likely to have been crofts.

By 1871 there were still three households listed at Mingarry. One was the Priest's House. Another was a three windowed house occupied by a carpenter, John McLellan, and his family. The last was a five windowed house occupied by the Farm Manager, Ambrose Griffith, and his family. It is evident from the later O.S. Name Book that this last house was known as Mingarry Park and housed the school. All occupant families originated from outwith the area.

The Ordnance Survey map surveyed in 1872-3 shows the church, priest's house and school with out-houses and one other roofed building along the north side of the road. At the original site of Mingarry to the north there are one roofed building and 29 unroofed buildings, two enclosures, and some field walls. The track to High Mingarry leaves the parliamentary road to the west of the bridge over Mingarry burn and curves northward crossing the burn twice before ending at a ford just south of the one roofed building. There were also buildings at Cnoc Breac and Deek to the south of the road to the east. These last two houses appear to have been listed with those of Moss or Dalnabreac in the census returns.

**From the O.S. Name Book for the First Edition OS Map published in 1876**

The extracts are NOT exact copies. The names in **bold** are those printed on the map. The two - occasionally more - names given are those of local people - typically the local clergyman, gamekeeper, schoolmaster and occasionally landowner - who testify to the name of natural or structural features. Most of the names in the area were testified to by the Rev. William McIntosh, the R.C. priest from Arisaig, who died in 1877, the year after the Edition was published, at the age of 83! The English meanings of the words were given, if known. Sometimes a names was labelled "obscure" or simply left alone and corrections were added by other hands, presumably at the fair at Oban where they were displayed for comment before publication.

**Mingarry.** Rev Wm McIntosh, Mr A Griffiths & Ranald McDonald. Some ruins situated about 20 chains North of Mingarry Park. Property of Lord Howard of Glossop.

**\*Drochaid Allt nan Coinneal.** [Roman Print.] Rev Wm McIntosh & Ranald McDonald. Bridge of the ?Candle.

A small bridge crossing a burn about 5 chains Southeast of St Mary's RC Chapel. Situated on the C Road and maintained at the expense of the county.

**Mingarry Park.** Rev Wm McIntosh, Mr A Griffiths, Manager & Tenant & Ranald McDonald. House situated about 5 chains Southwest of St Mary's RC Chapel. 2 storeys high and in a state of good repair. Property of Lord Howard of Glossop.

**St Mary's Chapel.** Mr A Griffith, Ranald McDonald, Mr Wm McDonald, Merchant, Blain. Erected 1862-3 by Hope-Scott Esq & dedicated to St Mary. It is seated for 600.

**School.** (School to be written to the West end of the building called Mingarry Park & Mingarry Park to be written on the East side). Mr A Griffiths, Ranald McDonald, Mr McDonald, Merchant, Blain. School held in the West wing of the building called Mingarry Park. It is a subscription school. Average number of pupils 40. It is in connection with the St Mary's RC Chapel adjacent.

Confusingly, the Valuation Roll Records for the Estate in 1869 do not mention Mingarry at all (See Appendix III). The proprietor is named as Hope-Scott. The house at Deek is listed at a value of £4 per annum and the tenant was Alexander MacDonald Jnr. A William was recorded as occupier of a property valued at £150 at "Cliff etc.". This was presumably the farm at Cliff. In 1870-71 the Deek entry remained unchanged. William Johnston was recorded as occupier of property valued at £150 at **Mingarry**. This is probably at Cliff and not at Mingarry at all. There is no mention of Mr. Griffiths or a school. The ownership of the estate changed to Lord Howard of Glossop in late 1871, but the valuation Roll entries remained similar for Deek and Mingarry until 1879-80 when Alexander or Archibald McDonald, mason, also became a tenant at Mingarry. It is possible that another house could have been built, probably to the south of the road, at about that time.

A copy of the O.S. map revised in 1895 shows two buildings at Deek and one at Cnoc Breac to the southeast. The Church, the Priest's House, the school and its outbuildings, and one other roofed building are shown on the north side of the road. Five buildings have appeared to the south of the road. These are likely to be houses and their outbuildings. There were no roofed buildings at the site of the old township. The track to High Mingarry had been changed to the route of the present day track. This track, and the bridges that carry it over the burns are believed to have been built in this period to enable Lord Howard of Glossop's family to picnic at High Mingarry.



### **The 20<sup>th</sup> and 21st Centuries**

Following the death of Lord Howard of Glossop and two rapid changes of ownership, the Corlett family became proprietors of Lochshiel Estate in the first half of the twentieth century. Local accounts indicate that the site was probably used for military training in WWII. The south and northeast parts of High Mingarry were planted with conifers in the 1960s.

The present day Mingarry consists of the Roman Catholic Church, the Church Hall, the Clanranald Hotel and a mixture of 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and modern houses all sited along the road side or to the south of the road.

On the current OS1:10000map (1974) at High Mingarry there are 11 unroofed buildings, one enclosure, some field walls and part of a head dyke.

## Local Tradition

### 1. Clanranald's Blacksmith

There is a local tradition that Mingarry was the site of Clanranald's Forge where his Smith /armourer worked in the middle ages. However, it is unclear whether this tradition existed before the discovery of the Mingarry "Anvil" at High Mingarry in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

There is no doubt that such a specialist Smith/armourer would have existed in the area. The fragments of historical references and the oral traditions have been drawn together by Hugh Cheape in his paper "Clanranald's Blacksmith" (Clan Donald Magazine No. 12 1991). He states that there is a Stewart tradition that in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Clanranald's Smith named Raibeart a'Pheitidh and his wife Morag fostered the son of Alexander and Margaret Stewart of Invernahyle who became known as "Donald of the Hammers". He writes that

*Tradition is firm that as smith or armourer of Moidart he was a man of status and substance. Whether by his own ability and resourcefulness or by virtue of his office as armourer, he was tacksman of farms on Loch Shielside. This was probably in the area of Mingarry or Shielbridge since tradition records that his young foster-son could dive into a pool of the River Shiel near the Smith's house and bring up a salmon with his hands. His skill is recalled in Stewart tradition which averred that Raibeart's armour-work bore the highest reputation, so much so that it was a common question in the district "Is that a Moidart-made sword you wear?"*

The story about the proximity of the forge to the river may indicate that the smith may have been based at Blain rather than at Mingarry.

### 2. The Bridge of Donald Dubh Laidir Mingarraigh (Strong Black Donald of Mingarry)

#### Map Ref:6864 7028

The story is that a coffin route crossed the burn to the west of High Mingarry and on one occasion the mourners were trying to cross the burn in a spate and the coffin was swept away and smashed, releasing the body. This was considered to be a shameful event, which reflected badly on the local people, and Donald MacVarish (Donald Dubh Laidir Mingarraigh) is said to have built the bridge single-handed so that it would never be repeated.

#### The MacVarish Family

Donald was one of four brothers, namely: Donald, Alexander, Hugh and Angus, living in Mingarry in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This family were famous locally as strong men and, even in the 1960s, there were still stories being told about their exploits. It is at least possible that they were related to, if not descended from Hugh MacVarish and Mary MacVarish mentioned in the 1748 survey.

Although the subsequent histories of Alexander, Hugh and Angus are fairly well established, little is known of Donald. It is said by members of the McVarish family that he went to Australia. He is not present in Mingarry in the census of 1841; no further evidence of him has so far come to light.

The Roman Catholic Church records show that On January 8th 1833 Alexander McVarish of Mingarry married Catherine Stuart of Mingarry. The couple emigrated to Canada about 1841 with four children. On arrival in North America, Alexander described himself as coming from Mingarry Ard, Scotland (David Craig, On the Crofter's Trail Birlinn 1990). This may indicate that the settlement was already divided into two parts at that date. Catherine MacVarish, nee Stuart, lived to an advanced age and died in Canada in 1911. At the time of her death, Catherine MacVarish was the matriarch of 14 children, 65 grandchildren, 68 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren -- a total of 149! Hugh died in Scotland but Angus, also went to North America, settled in the western part of Antigonish County, and changed his name to 'MacDonald.' The family is recorded in e John L McDougall's "History of Inverness County" (Truro: New Pub. Co. Ltd 1922 )

### **3. Still site**

In the 1960s, local stories about High Mingarry mention a still being operated in the ravine, NM 689 702. It was said that the still was sited below a waterfall so that the chimney could run under the overhang and keep the smoke from rising above the trees.

## Artefacts from Mingarry

### 1. Bloom remnant

In 2003 an excursion of local historians to High Mingarry was examining the bridge of Domnhuill Dubh Laidir when one of the sharp-eyed visitors noticed an unusual stone in the stream. This proved to be the fused base of an old iron bloomery kiln, further pieces of which were later found scattered down the stream. No slag has so far been found in this stream, nor has the original site of the bloomery been established, but a small piece of iron slag has been found close to a stream lower down the hill (NM 686 698). No doubt more will come to light when a more concentrated examination is made.



Possible piece of Bloomery Base



Piece of slag found at Mingarry

### 2. Clanranald's Anvil

According to local accounts, this strange object was discovered in the 1920s by a local man (John MacDonald, Burnside, Mingarry, known as 'The Clachair') when working in High Mingarry. He brought it back to his house and for a time it lay in his garden as an ornament. Then it was given to the Parish Priest, Father Campbell, who kept it on the outside windowsill of the Priest's House for many years. In the early 1980s it was displayed in the thatched building known as Cnoc Breac, which had been turned into a local museum. It left the district in 1986 and is now kept in the West Highland Museum, Fort William.

Unfortunately the location of the find in High Mingarry was not recorded, the only work likely to have been going on in the 1920s was related to the forestry, although it is possible that there could have been some maintenance to the stream embankment. This would be close to the only building that seems to be suitable for a smithy, close to the stream near the second bridge, but that building was not featured on the early 19th century Estate Map.

The anvil is a strangely shaped lump of metal.

It was well described by Hugh Cheape in his paper "Clanranald's Blacksmith" (Clan Donald Magazine No12 1991)

It is an irregularly shaped lump of iron or steel of a density as to make it very difficult to lift without a conscious and deliberate exertion of strength. Given its relatively small size, this dead-weight quality will come as a surprise to anyone intending to lift or move it. Without sophisticated testing, it is not possible here to account for its character except to suggest that the anvil is of steel with a relatively high carbon content subjected to a long process of hardening and tempering.

The base measures  $7\frac{1}{8}$  in (18 cm) over its longest dimension and is not flat and barely in the same plane as the top. This may be a deliberate feature rather than an indication of damage in antiquity, the irregular surface potentially bedding more securely into a wooden block to bring the anvil up to a practical working height. Certainly, the anvil should have been set perfectly level for best results. One might speculate that it would have been set *air ploc daraich*, on a block of best Loch Shiel oak. The height of the anvil is almost 8 in (20 cm approximately). The top working surface is approximately  $11\frac{3}{4}$  (30cm) over its length and  $6\frac{3}{4}$  in (17cm) across. A protruding 'beak' gives it added length over the base.

A good anvil may be judged by its ring. When struck, the anvil gives off a clear, high-pitched 'ring', of a note and intensity that is nothing short of memorable and mystical, perhaps, to the receptive ear, a voice from the past.

The object is everywhere described as an anvil but has little resemblance to any other known anvil of the medieval period or later that I have been able to discover. However, there were Viking anvils of an approximately cubic shape, which resemble this object, except for the protruding 'beak'.

One of the vertical faces features a nose of human size, leading to the supposition that it was used for the manufacture of face armour. All conventional anvils have a convex curved surface around which iron can be shaped. The Moidart anvil has several faces (all the faces except for the base and that with a nose) with different concave surfaces, which would require a totally different technique for shaping flat plates of iron. All of the other faces, except for the flat, rough base, are curves of different radius. It seems at least possible that the object might not have been used for shaping iron, but might have been a means of moulding armour from thick hides. It is hoped to consult some specialist leather workers to investigate this aspect further.



**Front view of Anvil**



**Anvil Base**



**Rear View of Anvil**

### **3. Still site**

In the 1960s, local stories about High Mingarry mention a still being operated in the ravine, NM 689 702. It was said that the still was sited below a waterfall so that the chimney could run under the overhang and keep the smoke from rising above the trees.

### **Some early inhabitants of the “Modern” Mingarry.**

Census records indicate that the building of the main nucleus of the Mingarry we are familiar with today started after the Lochshiel Estate was purchased by Mr Hope Scott in 1855. The Priest’s House had been built and was occupied by 1861. The Church was being built at that time and was consecrated in 1862. At sometime in the next eight years, the building known as Mingarry Park or the School was constructed.

### **Charles MacDonald, Priest of Moidart 1859-1892**

One of the first people to live in the “new” Mingarry was Charles Macdonald, Roman Catholic Priest of Moidart. His life has been well documented by Iain Thornber in the foreword of the 1989 Edition of Father Charles Book “Moidart or Among the Clanranalds”, and again by John Watts in introduction to the edition published in 1997. Father Jerome Ireland also wrote a short account of the life of Father Charles, in one of his series of articles entitled “Some Priests of Moidart” published in the weekly parish news-sheets in the late 1960s.

Charles MacDonald was born of Clanranald stock, near Inverness in 1835. He was educated at Blair’s college, Aberdeen, and later at colleges and seminaries in France, and received Minor orders in Paris in 1857. He returned to Scotland in 1859 and was ordained Priest in 1859 in Glasgow. He arrived in Moidart in October 1859 and immediately set about learning Gaelic. From the various accounts, a picture emerges of a red-haired energetic, short-tempered intelligent man. He enjoyed the company of wealthy, well educated friends and was an excellent conversationalist. He carried out his duties ministering to the local population with what appears to have been genuine affection, and was generally well-liked. He did not hesitate to travel around his wild parish on horseback in all weathers in spite of frequently indifferent health. Some of the local anecdotes related by John Watts are particularly revealing, such as the account of Father Charles intervention in fights that sometimes broke out between protestant and Catholics at the Old Bridge over the Shiel. The priest would “whip his parishioners home with a hazel stick”

He is best known for his book “Moidart or Among the Clanranalds” published in 1889, near the end of his life. Ill health had already caused him to spend a year in Egypt (1886-87) He was finally forced to give up his mission in Moidart in 1992 and died in Helenburgh in 1894. His body was returned to Moidart and interred on the Green Isle.

### **The Griffith Family**

Although the House named Mingarry Park is purported to have been purpose built on the instruction of Mr Hope Scott in the 1860s as a school for Roman Catholic pupils and with the intension of extending the building to provide accommodation for a small convent, it is clear that, at the time of the 1871 census, it was occupied by the family of Ambrose Griffith, who was recorded as being the Lochshiel Estate Farm Manager. The Ordnance Survey Name Book indicates that the school occupied one side of the house. The school teacher was listed at the same address in the 1881 census.

Ambrose Griffith was born in Gargrina, Donegall, Ireland . His parents were Ambrose Griffith, described as a crofter, and Elizabeth Griffith nee Mochan. His wife, Jane (nee Aymers) was born in Newcastle, England in about 1840 and her father John Aymers was a farmer. We do not know where and how the couple met, but they married in Galashiels in 1861. Their first child, Mary Ann was born in Melrose around 1862, but their second child Ambrose was born at Mingarry around 1865. It seems likely that the family were the first



occupants of the house and that they were established there by 1865. During their years in Moidart, Ambrose (Senior) is described variously as being Farm Manager, Estate Factor and Manager of roads etc. Their third child, Douglas, was born about 1866, their fourth, Michael in 1868 and their fifth, Isabella or Belle in 1870. Tragically, wee Michael died on 7/7/1871 in a scarlet fever epidemic. Later that year a fourth son was born who was christened Michael Joseph but who became known as Joseph. Five more children : Jessie, Helen, John, Agness and Teresa were born over the next decade at roughly two yearly intervals .

Disaster struck in 1886. Jane Griffith died at midnight on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> of May having been delivered of another son at 3p.m. in the afternoon. She was probably about 45 years of age. The death was certified by Symers Macdonald Macvicar and the cause of death given as heart failure . Her death and the birth of her son, Robert George, were both registered on the following Friday at Acharacle. The Registrar was James Mackay and the informant was fourteen year old Joseph Griffith. We can only speculate that his father, Ambrose, must have been away from home at the time of the tragedy and that poor Joseph was the eldest male in the household and had to manage as best as he could.

At some time in the next five years, the family left Moidart and at the time of the 1891 census were living in Old Kilpatrick where Ambrose (senior) was employed as a labourer in a chemical works. Seven children were still living at home and 24 year old Joseph Griffiths was working as a waiter in the spirit trade.

Ambrose Griffith died of heart disease on 18<sup>th</sup> of April 1901 at the age of sixty-eight years. He was living at 2 Stewart Street in Partick, Glasgow. The informant was his eldest daughter, Mary Macintyre who was living nearby at 111 Kinneston St, Partick.

All this information was researched by Jean Cameron and compiled from Census records, death certificates of Jane, Andrew and Michael Griffiths and the birth certificates of Michael Joseph, Jessie and Robert George Griffith.

## Appendix I

### Church Record Entries for People from Mingarry, transcribed by Jean Lawson

#### Marriages

1833

Jan 8 Alexander McVarish, Mingarry & Catherine Stuart, Mingarry  
Witnesses: Duncan McVarish & Hugh McVarish

1836

Feb 3 John McMaster, Mingarry & Mary McPherson, Mingarry AUSTRALIA 1852  
Witnesses: John McPherson & Donald McVarish. Rev. A McD

1841? June 7 Ranald McIsaac & Ann McKinnon, Dalilea. GLASGOW 1851  
Witnesses: Angus McIsaac, Mingarry & John McIsaac, Croft. Rev. R R

1842

Jan 31 Alexander McIsaac & Peggy McDonald, Mingarry. CANADA 1850  
Witnesses: John McLean, Glenuig & Donald McIsaac, Eгнаig.

1844

Feb 19 John McVarish, Mingarry & Mary McPherson, Kentra.  
Witnesses: Alexander McIsaac & Ewen McPherson, Mingarry. Rev. R R.

Feb 17 Donald Cameron & Ann Cameron ?Branachan Ardnamurchan FORT WILLIAM 1852  
Witnesses: Alexander McDonald, Mingarry & John McDonald, Scardoise. Rev. R R.

1845

July 25 Allan McDonald, Cliffe & Mary McDonald, Mingarry WENT TO PORT PHILIP 1852  
Witnesses: John McDonald, Cliffe & John McDonald, Mingarry. Rev. R R.

1846

Jan 14 Donald McDonald, Dalilea & Kitty McDonald, Mingarry  
Witnesses: Alexander McVarish & John McDonald, Mingarry. Rev. R R.

1847

Feb ND John McMartin, Mingarry & ? By the Rev William ? McIntosh, Arisaig .

1854

(On separate page- checked date but needs checking again unless copier misread it)

Extract from the Registry of Marriages in the Catholic Church in Moidart 1854, May 29  
May 29 After due proclamation of banns John McDougall ? & Ann Mc?, Invermoidart were married by me on  
this 29th day of May at Mingarry - Dugald McDougal, Glenforslan & Roderick Mcdonald being witnesses. C McD.  
?? McKenzie June 28 1915.

*NOTE Although no Mingarry residents are named, this record is included as it may mark the start of marriages taking place at or somewhere near to the Mingarry Church site, even though the building was not finished until 1862/3. It is ironic that, though after this date most of the Marriage Register has weddings taking place AT Mingarry, very few people were FROM there. Records where the witnesses were from Mingarry, although the bride or groom were no, are included.*

1865

July 4 Donald MacVarish, Arisaig & Mary McDonald, Blain at Mingarry  
Witnesses: Ambrose Griffiths, Mingarry & Alexander Cameron ?Caol. Rev. C McD

**1871**

Sept 27 Allan McDonald, Dorlin & Mary McDonald, Dalnabreck, at Mingarry  
Witnesses: Angus McDonald, Langal & Mary Ann McPherson, Mingarry. Rev. C McD.

**1872**

Jan 31 John McEachan, Dalnabreck & Margaret McEachan, Langal at Mingarry.  
Witnesses: Roderick McDonald, Langal & Mary Ann McPherson, Mingarry. Rev C McD

**1873**

Jan 29 Donald McDonald, ? & Ann McDonald, Mingarry at Mingarry  
Witnesses: Ranald McDonald, Dalnabreck & Mary Ann McPherson, Mingarry. C McD

**1881**

Feb 2 Angus McDonald, Dalilea & Catherine ?McPherson, ?Glenuig ?Mingarry (over-written)  
Witnesses: Alexander Matheson, Salen & Mary Ann McPherson, Mingarry. Rev C McD.

**1883**

Jan 17 John McLellan, Mallaig, North Morar & Mary Gillies, Eilean Shona  
Witnesses: John McLellan, Mingarry & Margaret Gillies, Eilean Shona. Rev John MacKintosh.

**1887**

May 31 Angus McDonald, Cnoc a breac & Flora Cameron, Strontian  
Witnesses: Donald McDonald, Mingarry & Ann McDonald, Mingarry. Rev Angus McRae.

**1888**

May 20 Peter McLaren, Moss & Isabella McDonald, Cnoc a Breac at Mingarry.  
Witnesses: John McLellan, Mingarry & Peter Grant, Dalilea. Rev C McD.

**1895**

Feb 6 John McDonald, Dalnabreck & Ann McMillan, Mingarry.  
Witnesses: John McLellan & Angus McDonald. Rev D McK.

**1897**

June 3 Hugh Cameron, Ranachan, Strontian & Flora McDonald, Camusine Hill, Strontian at Mingarry.  
Witnesses: Hugh McInnes, Dorlin, Moidart & Angus McDonald, Mingarry. Rev D McK.

**1903**

Feb 5 Donald McDonald, Moss & Christina McDonald, Mingarry.  
Witnesses: --- --- & Hughina McDonald. Rev D McK.

**1905**

June 7 Donald McDonald, Resipol & Mary McDonald, Mingarry.  
Witnesses: John McLellan & Catherine McDonald. Rev D McK.

**1906**

*(Note added on small rectangle of lined paper, presumably found in book by 1898 entries & photocopied there, rather than in sequence, by compilers. No indication of Mingarry inhabitants - or, indeed, of a bridegroom -- but added for indication of initiative)*

“I got married on the 14th Nov 1906 at Mingarry Chapel by Provost MacIntosh, Margaret MacNeil.”

**1908**

Oct 12 ?Roger Murray & Helen McKenzie.  
Witnesses: John McDonald, Mingarry & Donald McLean. Rev D McK.

## Appendix II

### Census data 1841 to 1901, Transcribed by Jean Cameron

#### 1841 Census

(Names are followed by age and occupation where given. Y = Born in Moidart)

505

**County:** Inverness **District:** S Morar, Arisaig and Moidart **Parish:** Ardnamurchan (Part of)  
**Enumeration Distict: 12/16**

**Enumerator:** Don? McPherson (7/6/1841)

**Person appointed by Sheriff or Provost to divide the Parish:** Donald Corbet (15/6/1841)

**Sheriff:** A Fraser (29/6/1841)

**So much of the Parish of Acharacle formerly part of the Parish of Ardnamurchan as lies within the Boundaries of the Farms of Cliff, Blain and Mingarry and ~~Dalnabreac~~ in Moidart.**

#### Blain

*(There is no mention of Moss. JC)*

Donald McPherson 20 Merchant

Sarah McPherson 15

Flora McPherson 13

William McPherson 10

-----

James McDonald 15 MS

Ranald Rankin 35

John McDonald 30 Ag Lab

(All Y)

Angus McDonald 40 Ag Lab

Mary McDonald 35

Donald McDonald 15

Margaret McDonald 12

Mary McDonald 10

Catherine McDonald 7

Coll McDonald 2

Ann McDonald 6m

(All Y)

Mashel Michael McDonald 50 Ag Lab

Mary McDonald 50

Mary McDonald 15

Donald McDonald 11

(All Y)

Alexr Kennaird 55 Ag Lab

Sarah Kennaird 55

Donald Mcelellan 25 Ag Lab

Roderick Stewart 10  
(All Y)

Alexr McDonald McGregor 35  
Jessie McGregor 35  
(Both Y)

Archd McDonald 55 Ag Lab  
Jean McDonald 40  
Isabella McDonald 14  
Alexr McDonald 13  
Allan McDonald 12  
Mary McDonald 6  
Margret McDonald 2  
(All Y)

Donald MacDonald 60 Agricultural Labourer  
Hugh MacDonald 35 or 25 MS  
John MacDonald 20 MS  
Mary(?) MacDonald 20  
Jessie MacDonald 15  
Ann MacDonald 12

-----  
John MacDonald 25  
Flora MacDonald 20  
(All Y)

Angus McDonald 30 Ag Lab  
Christy McDonald 40  
Margret McDonald 75

-----  
John Arnot 12  
Jean Arnot 8  
Isabella Arnot 2  
Angus McPherson 40 Army Pensioner  
(All Y)

Alexr McDonald 35 Shoemaker  
Mary McDonald 30  
Angus McDonald 13  
Margret McDonald 10  
Donald McDonald 3  
Mary McDonald 2  
(All Y)

Hugh McDonald 45 Shoemaker  
Ann McDonald 30  
Rodrick McDonald 13  
Jean McDonald 11  
Sarah McDonald 8  
Catherine McDonald 3

Flora McDonald 2m  
Flora McMaster 15 FS  
(All Y)

Angus Kennedy 40 Ag Lab  
Catherine Kennedy 35  
Flora Kennedy 10  
Cathrine Kennedy 8  
Allan Kennedy 5  
Alexr Kennedy 2  
Alexr Kennedy 10  
(All Y)

**Mingarry**

Lachlan McDonald 50 Ag Lab  
Catherine McDonald 45  
Alexr McDonald 20  
Donald McDonald 15  
Catherine McDonald 10  
Sarah McDonald 5  
-----  
Mary McDonald 30  
(All Y)

Alexr McDonald 30 Ag Lab  
Catherine McDonald 25  
Mizzie McDonald 75  
John McDonald 5  
Mary McDonald 4  
Angus McDonald 2  
(All Y)

Cliff: Four Entries

**Mingarry**

John McMaster 30 Farmer  
Jane McDonald 60  
Christy McMaster 15  
John McMaster 4 or 11  
(All Y)

John McDonald 30 C. Farmer  
Mary McDonald 40  
Mary McDonald 15  
Marjory McDonald 12  
Alexander McDonald 27  
(All Y)

Ewan McMaster 40 Farmer  
John McMaster 20 Ag Lab

Mary McMaster 9  
Flora McMaster 4  
Barbara McMaster 2  
John McMaster 1  
Archibald McMaster 15

-----  
Mary McInnes 25 FS  
(All Y)

Alexander McDonald 25 Mason  
Angus McDonald 30 Mason  
Archibald McDonald 20  
John McDonald 11  
Archibald McDonald 20  
Flora McDonald 20  
(All Y)

John McDonald 40 Farmer  
Anne McDonald 30  
Mary McInnis 20  
(All Y)

John McPherson 25 Farmer  
Anne McPherson 20  
Catherine McPherson 14  
Sarah McLean 50  
Ewan McMaster 2  
Not Known Male About 20  
Jessie McIsaac 10  
(All Y)

Effie McPherson 55 Y

John McPherson 25 Ag Lab  
Sarah McPherson 55  
Anne McPherson 25  
Catherine McPherson 15  
Ewan McMaster 2  
Donald McMaster 5  
NK Female About 20  
(All Y)

Angus McDonald 40 Farmer  
Anne McDonald 40  
Mary McDonald 35  
Christy McDonald 10  
John McDonald 7  
Mary McDonald 4  
Allan McEachan 5  
Catherine McEachan 40  
Mary McEachan 45

(All Y)

Hugh McPherson 40 Farmer  
Flora McPherson 40  
(Both Y)

(Looks like new entry, but may not be)

Margaret McMillan 35  
Alexander McPherson 13  
Isabella McPherson 12  
Lachlan McPherson 10  
Ewan McPherson 8  
Donald McPherson 6  
Angus McPherson 3  
Duncan McPherson 1  
(All Y)

Isobal McPhee 60 Y

Margaret McDonald 60  
Donald McPhee 9  
(Both Y)

**End of District 16**

*(No comments at end of District. JC)*

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**Enumeration District: 13/17**

**Enumerator:** Ranald Corbet (7/6/1841)

**Person appointed by Sheriff or Provost to divide the Parish:** Donald Corbet (15/6/1841)

**Sheriff:** A Fraser (29/6/1841)

**So much of the Parish of Acharacle quod sacra formerly part of the Parish of Ardnamurchan as lies within ~~the Boundaries of the farms of Glenaladale, including Gasean, Lochseil(sic) alias Dalilea,~~ and the farm of Langall, all in Moidart, including Dalnabreac in said Country extending from the River of Glenaladale to the western boundary of the farm of Langall along the Northern Banks of Lochshiel(sic).**

**Enumerator:** Ranald Corbet (7/6/1841)

**Person appointed by Sheriff or Provost to divide the Parish:** Donald Corbet (15/6/1841)

**Sheriff:** A Fraser (29/6/1841)

*(Some entries difficult to read, as one family at times runs into the next. JC)*

**(?Deeke?)**

**Dyke**

John McMaster 40 Crofter  
Ann McMaster 17  
Jane McMaster 15  
Ketty McMaster 13  
Ann McMaster 11  
Mary McMaster 9



Ketty McMaster 5

---

Flory McIsaac 40  
(All Y)

Gasgan: 3 entries

Dalilea: 1 entry

### **Dyke**

Rodrick McDonald 50 Crofter

John McDonald 13

Bell McDonald 15

Mary McDonald 12

Ann McDonald 10

-----

Ketty McMaster 45

Niel McFadden 50 Taylor Y

(All Y)

Dalilea: 8 entries

Langal: 4 entries

Dalnabreac: 10 entries

13

Glenaladale: 2 entries

### **Census Scotland**

#### **Manse of Aharacle**

**17/6/1841**

**I hereby declare that the enumeration Schedules of such part of the Parish of Ardnamurchan as lies in the County of Inverness have been submitted for my inspection – and from the fitness of the Parish Schoolmaster of Ardnamurchan to discharge the duties he undertook of the diligent attention shown by him – I believe the Schedules to be generally correct.**

**Samuel Cameron**

**Minister of Aharacle**

## **1851 Census**

(Names are followed by Status in Household/Relationship to head of household:

H=Head. W=wife S=son D=Daughter N=niece/nephew V=Visitor Serv=Servant

Then follows marital status: M= Married U=Unmarried W=Widowed

Then follows Age and Occupation and Place of Birth. )

**County:** Inverness **District:** Moidart **Parish:** Acharacle Quoad Sacra

**District: 5**

So much of the Quoad Sacra Parish of Acharacle formerly of the Parish of Ardnamurchan as lies between the boundaries of the farms of Cliff, Blain, Mingary and Dalnabreac in Moidart.

**Enumerator:** Archibald Fletcher (31/3/1851)

**Person appointed by Sheriff or Provost to superintend the enumeration of Parish:** John McCowan (4/4/1851)

**Sheriff:** Alexr McDonald (16/4/1851)

Cliff: 1 – 2

**BLAIN**

*(There is no mention of Moss. JC)*

4

John McDonald H M 48 General Merchant Grocer Inv Tulloch  
Ann McDonald W M 42 Inv Glengarry  
Catherine McDonald D U 18 Inv Glengarry  
Marjory McDonald D U 20 Inv Glengarry  
Mary McDonald D 14 Inv Glengarry  
Donald McDonald S 11 Inv Glenfinnan  
Rhoderick McDonald S 9 Scholar Inv Glenfinnan  
Alexander McDonald S 7 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Joana McDonald D 1 Inv Moidart  
    John McInnes Serv U 26 Farm Servant Inv Moidart

5.

Michael McVarish H M 67 Farmer Inv Moidart  
Mary McVarish W M 65 Inv Moidart  
Rhoderick McVarish S U 25 Inv Moidart  
Catherine McVarish D U 23 Inv Moidart  
Donald McVarish S U 20 Inv Moidart  
Alexander Grant V U 23 Miner Inv Moidart

6

Mary Gillies H W 62 Farmer Arg Aharacle  
Margaret Corbet D U 22 Inv Moidart  
Marjory Corbet D U 20 Inv Moidart

7

Duncan Corbett H M 60 Labourer Arg Ard  
Mary McLean W M 50 Inv Arisaig  
Allan Corbett S U 24 Inv Arisaig  
John Corbett S U 22 Inv Moidart  
Norman Corbett S U 18 Inv Moidart  
William Corbett S U 16 Inv Moidart  
Jane Corbett D 13 Inv Moidart

8

Andrew Grant H Wdr 67 Farmer Inv Arisaig  
Peter Grant S U 19 Inv Moidart  
Margaret Grant D U 17 Inv Moidart  
Catherine Grant D 13 Inv Moidart

9

Christian McDonald H U 40 Farmer Inv Moidart  
Angus McDonald N 6 Glasgow

10

Margaret McInnes H Wdr 57 Farmer Inv Ach  
Angus McDonald S U 20 Inv Ach  
Marjory McDonald D U 18 Inv Ach  
Sarah McDonald D 14 Arg Ard  
Catherine McDonald D 12 Inv Ach  
Ann McDonald D 2 !! Inv Ach

11

Alexander Kennaird H M 60 Farmer Inv Arisaig  
Isabella McDonald W M 40 Glasgow  
Donald Kennaird S 6 Inv Moidart

12

Ann Kennaird? H W 50 Pauper Inv Arisaig  
Flora Stewart D U 18 Inv Egg  
Margaret Stewart D 9 Inv Egg

13

Alexander McGregor H M 56 Pauper Inv Moidart  
Jannet McEachan W M 50 Pauper Arg Morven

14

Alexander McIntyre H U 74 Farmer Arg Sunart  
Catherine Sis M 70 Arg Sunart  
John McGregor N U 26 Inv Ach  
Jane McGregor N U 25 Inv Ach  
Duncan McIntyre B U 68 Arg Sunart  
Peter McDonald B(sic) U 18 (sic) Inv Ac.  
Catherine McInnes V - 4 Inv Ach

15

Jane Cameron H M 40 Farmer Arg Ard  
Alexander McDonald S U 18 Inv Ach  
Margaret D 11 Inv Ach

16

Peter McNeil H M 53 Farmer Inv Ach  
Ann McDonald W M 44 Inv Ach  
Michael McNiel N 9 Inv Ach  
Margaret McDonald V U 60 Pauper Inv Ach

17

Clemmy McIntyre H Wd 60 Pauper Inv Ach  
Catherine McIntyre D U 25 Dressmaker Inv Ach

18

Ranald McDonald H M 64 Farmer Inv Borrodale  
Ann D U 16 Inv Acharacle  
Ranold S U 7 Inv Acharacle

19

Alexander McDonald H M 65? Farmer Inv Ach  
Ann McDonald W M 37 Inv Ach  
Mary McDonald D 11 Inv Ach  
Catherine McDonald D 9 Inv Ach  
Margaret McDonald D 6 Inv Ach  
John McDonald S 4 Inv Ach  
Archd McDonald S 2 Inv Ach  
Norman McDonald S 2m Inv Ach

### Mingary

20

Cathren McMillan H M 52 Farmer Arg Strontian  
Lachlan McPherson S U 20 Inv Moidart  
Ever? McPherson D U 22 Inv Moidart  
Donald McPherson S U 13 Inv Moidart  
Ann McPherson D U 10 Inv Moidart  
Duncan McPherson S U 8 Inv Moidart  
Archibald McPherson V U 27 Shoemaker Inv Moidart  
Euphemia McPherson V Wd 66 Inv Moidart

21

Cathrin McDonald H M 30 Farmer Fort George  
Hugh McVarish N U 11 Inv Moidart

22

Mary McInnes H M 32 Farmer Inv. Moidart  
Ann McDonald D U 9 Inv. Moidart  
Cathrine D U 7 Inv. Moidart  
Archibald S U 5 Inv. Moidart  
Cathrine Sis U 42 Inv. Moidart  
Ranald McInnes F M 80 Inv. Moidart

23

John McMaster H Wd 57 Farmer Inv. Moidart  
Jean McMaster Mother Wd 73 Inv. Moidart  
Mary McVarish Aunt U 70 Pauper Inv. Moidart  
Archibald McDougall V M 40 Farmer Inv. Moidart

24

Angus McDonald H M 76 Farmer Inv. Moidart  
Margaret McEachen W M 65 Inv. Moidart  
Angus McDonald S U 34 Inv. Moidart  
Archibald McDonald S U 23 Shoemaker Inv. Moidart  
John McDonald S U 20 Labourer Inv. Moidart  
Jennet(?) McDonald D U 25 Inv. Moidart

25

John McDonald H M 68 Tenant Inv Moidart  
Peggy McDonald W M 60 Inv Moidart  
John McDonald S U 28 Agr Labourer Inv Moidart  
Angus McDonald S U 32 Tailor Inv Moidart

Rhoderick McDonald S U 22 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Christian Paterson S/L U 50 Farmer(sic) (*See No 26 Inv Moidart*)

26

Alexander McDonald H M 45  
(*'Farmer' See No 25 – should possibly be for this entry JC*)

Flora McDonald W M 30  
Alexander McDonald S 15  
John McDonald S 13  
Ranold McDonald S 9  
John McDonald S 7  
Ann McDonald D 4  
Cathrine McDonald D 1  
John McDonald B 56 Labourer  
Angus McEachern V M 67 Manager  
(All Inv Moidart)

27

Margaret McPherson H Wd 75 Pauper Inv Moidart

28

Flora McDonald H Wd 51 Farmer  
Ann McMaster D U 19  
Mary McMaster D U 17  
Cathrine McMaster D 11  
Mary McDonald Cousin U 50 Servant  
(All Inv Moidart)

29

Mary McInnes H Wd 47 Farmer  
Flora McMaster D 14  
Barbara McMaster D 13  
John McMaster S 10  
Hugh McMaster S 8  
(All Inv Moidart)

30

Allan McEachran H M 68 Farmer  
Mary McEachran Sis U 54  
Catherine McEachran Sis U 50  
Ann McEachran Sis M 48  
Cathrine McIssac V M 52  
Cirsty McIssac V U 18  
Mary McIssac V 13  
(All Inv Moidart)

31

John McDonald H M 38 Farmer  
Mary McPherson W M 30  
Rhoderick McDonald S 4

Ann McDonald D 2  
(All Inv Moidart)

32

Hugh McInnes H Wdr 38 Shoemaker Inv Kilmallie  
John McInnes S 11 Arg Ard

Dalnabreac: 33 to 42

Remarks of the Minister of the Parish

I have looked over this book and believe it to be correct. The district of the parish was frequently put down as the place of birth in place of the parish initially – that has now been corrected.

**David Stewart, Minister of Ardnamurchan.**

**(Revised 1/10/1851)**

## 1861 Census

( Number of windows in the house added to each entry)

### District 5

**County of Argyle Registration District: Aharacle**

Psrt of the parish of Aharacle, bounded on the west by River Shiel, on the South by the Parliamentary Road at Blain, on the East by a straight line from the Parliamentary Road at Mingary to Kinlochmoidart, on the north by the Atlantic Ocean. Eilean Shona is included in this division comprising Eilean Shona, Blain, Portavat, Dorlin and Mingary.

**Enumerator:** Charles Cameron

*(No date, and no other details either at beginning or end of District. JC)*

### Mingarry

30

Hugh McDougald H M 40 Farmer of 2 acres

Julia McDougald W M 35

John McDougald S 9

Donald or Dugald McDougald S 6

Mary McDougald D 6

Hugh McDougald S 3

Catherine McDougald D 1

(Two windows. All Inv Aharacle)

31

Roderick McVarish H M 35 Farmer of 2? acres Inv Aharacle

Mary McVarish W M 32 Inv Arisaig

Mary McVarish D 3 Inv Aharacle

Michael McVarish S 1 Inv Aharacle

Catherine McVarish Servant U 32 Domestic Servant Inv Aharacle

(Two windows)

32

Charles McDonald H U 25 Roman Catholic Priest Inv Inverness

Mary McDonald Sis U 27 Housekeeper Inv Inverness

Alexander McDonald V U 34 Writer Inv Inverness  
Margery McDonald Servant 12 Domestic Servant Inv Moidart  
(Fourteen windows)

(End of the fifth sub-division of Enumeration Division.)

**District 6**

**Part of the Parish of Aharacle bounded on the west by Loch Shiel, and on the south by Glenaladale Burn, on the East by Innis Ruary Burn. On the North by the Parliamentary Road, comprising Blain Moss, Dalnabreac, Dalilea, Cuil, Glenmoidart.**

**Enumerator:** Hugh McNaughton

*(No date, and no other details either at beginning or end of District – JC)*

**Blain Moss**

1

Angus McDonald H W 87 Farmer of 3 acres  
Archd McDonald S U 32  
John McDonald S U 26  
Janet McDonald D U 24  
(Two windows. All Inv Aharacle)

2

Angus McDonald H M 54 Farmer of 'blank' acres Inv Aharacle  
Mary McDonald W M 40 Inv Aharacle  
(One window)

-----

Allan McEachan H U 86 Pauper formerly labourer Inv Aharacle  
Catherine McEachan Sis U 60 Pauper frmerly Domestic Servant Inv Aharacle  
(One window)

3

Archibald McDonald H M 32 Farmer of 2 acres Inv Aharacle  
Flora McDonald W M 24 Inv Egg  
Alexander McDonald S 4 Inv Aharacle  
Mary McDonald D 3 Inv Aharacle  
Charles McDonald S 2m or 9m Inv Aharacle  
(Two windows)

4

Ann Stewart H W 54 Pauper formerly farmer Inv Arisaig  
Margaret Stewart D U 19 Pauper Inv Egg  
(One window)

5

Alexander Kenard H W 76 Pauper fromerly farmer Inv Arisaig  
Donald Kenard S U 16 Pauper Inv Aharacle  
(One window)

6

Ann McDonald H W 50 Pauper formerly farmer

Archibald McDonald S 11 Scholar  
(One window. Both Inv Aharacle)

7

Euphemia McDonald H W 67 Pauper formerly servant Arg Aharacle

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Catherine McDonald H U 54 Pauper formerly servant Inv Aharacle

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Janet McGregor H W 64 Pauper formerly servant Arg Morven  
(Three windows)

8

Angus Kenard H W 75 Farmer of 2 acres Inv Arisaig  
Margaret Kenard D U 30 Inv Arisaig  
Mary McDugald Sis/L U 80 Boarder Inv Glenaladle  
(Two windows)

9

Ann McDonald H W 60 Farmer of 4 acres Inv Arisaig  
Margaret McDonald D U 25 Domestic Servant Inv Arisaig  
Dugald McDonald S M 32 Inv Arisaig  
Ann McDonald D/L M 25 Inv Aharacle  
Allan McDonald G/S 12m Inv Aharacle  
Mary Beaton G/D 12 Scholar Inv Arisaig  
Flora Beaton G/D 11 Scholar Inv Arisaig  
(Two windows)

10

Duncan Corbet H M 73 Farmer Arg Aharacle  
Mary Corbet W M 58 Inv Arisaig  
Norman Corbet S U 28 Inv Aharacle  
William Corbet S U 25 Inv Aharacle  
Jane Corbet D U 23 Inv Aharacle  
James McDonald V U 24 Inv Aharacle  
(Two windows)

11

Angus McDonald H M 50 Farmer of 3 acres Inv Aharacle  
Margaret McDonald W M 40 Arg Ard  
(One window)

12

John McGregor H M 36 Farmer of - acres Inv Aharacle  
Johana McGregor W M 27 Greenock  
Maryan McGregor D 3 Inv Aharacle  
Dugald McGregor S 15m Inv Aharacle  
Ann McLachlan V W 4(9?) Inv Arisaig  
(Two windows)

13

Donald McMillan H M 34 Farmer of 2 acres Arg Barra



Ann McMillan W M 40 Inv Glenfinnan  
Mary-Ann McMillan D 5 Perth Blair Atholl  
Sarah McMillan D 2 Inv Aharacle  
Peter McLauren N 7 Perth Blair Atholl  
Catherine McKinnon N 12 Inv Aharacle  
Catherine McIntyre Boarder W 80 Pauper Inv Glenelg  
Duncan McIntyre Boarder U 76 Pauper Domestic Servant Inv Aharacle  
(Windows - not stated)

14

Archibald McDonald H M 68 Farmer of 4 acres Arg Ard  
Jane McDonald W M 60 Arg Aharacle  
Alexander McDonald S U 30 Arg Aharacle  
Allan McDonald S U 24 Arg Aharacle  
Margaret McDonald D U 19 Inv Aharacle  
Angus McDonald Nephew 15 Scholar Glasgow  
Jane McDonald G/D 7 Scholar Inv Aharacle  
John McDonald Boarder W 50 Day Labourer Inv Aharacle  
(Two windows)

15

John McDonald H 52 Farmer Inv Aharacle  
Mary McDonald W 40 Arg Aharacle  
Roderick McDonald S 14 Inv Aharacle  
Ann McDonald D 10 Scholar Inv Aharacle  
Coll McDonald S 5 Scholar Inv Aharacle  
Donald McDonald S 9 Scholar Inv Aharacle  
Euin McDonald S 6m Inv Aharacle  
(One window)

16

Ann McMaster H W 58 Farmer of 3 acres  
Flora McMaster D U 21  
John McMaster S U 19  
(Two windows. All Inv Aharacle)

(End of the first sub-division of Enumeration District.)

Dalnabreac: 17 - 23

Dalilea: 24 - 28

Cuil: 29 - 30

Glenmoidart: 31 - 45

## 1871 Census

### District 5

**County:** Inverness

**Registration District:** Aharacle

**Enumerator:** Duncan Cameron

*(No date, and no other details either at beginning or end of District – JC)*

Part of the Parish of Aharacle Bounded on the West by the River Shiel on the South by the Parliamentary Road at Blain on the East by a straight line from the Parliamentary Road at Mingary to Kinlochmoidart, on the North by the Atlantic Ocean. Comprising Eillanshona, Dorlin, Blain, Portavata and Mingary.

Length 9 miles. Breadth 3 miles.

This District is Estimated at 9 miles by 3 miles, but in visiting the Houses in Eilleanshona the Island will have to be gone round and although the other Porton(sic) of the District is on the mainland a Similar Circuit will have to be made as there are houses near both the Sides of Lochshiel and Lochmoidart with a large hill Between the Lochs which hill has to be crossed for the purpose of Enumeration.

Shona Beag: 1

Eilleanshona: 2 – 18

Dorlin: 19 - 24

Cliff: 25

Blain: 26 - 28

### Mingary

29

John McLellan H M 42 House Carpenter Inv Morar

Catherine McLellan W M 38 Inv Glengarry

Bella McLellan D U 16 General Servant Domestic Arg Ardrishaig

John McLellan S 12 Scholar Inv Blain

Angusina McLellan D 5 Scholar Inv Mingary

Archibald Keith McLellan S 2 Inv Mingary

Ann McLellan D 2m Inv Mingary

(Three windows)

30

Ambrose Griffith H M 42 Farm Manager Ireland

Jane Griffith W M 30 England

Mary Ann Griffith D 8 Scholar Korburyshire Melrose

Ambrose Griffith S 6 Scholar Inv Mingary

Duglas(sic) Griffith D 5 Scholar Inv Mingary

Michael Griffith S 3 Inv Mingary

Isabella Griffith D 1 Inv Mingary

(Five windows)

31

Charles McDonald H U 35 Roman Catholic Priest Inv Inverness  
Jessie McDonald M W 67 Formerly Farmer's Wife Inv Auldearn  
Marjory McDonald Serv U 29 General Servant Domestic Inv Moidart  
Roderick McDonald Serv 12 Scholar Inv Moidart

(Eight windows)

Portavata: 32

**End of Dorlin, Cliff, Blain, Mingary and Portavata. Estate of Lochshiel.**

**Enumeration District 6**

Enumerator: Hugh McNaughton

*(No date, and no other details either at beginning or end of District – JC)*

Part of the Parish of Aharacle bounded on the West by Lochshiel on the South by Glenaladale Burn on the East by Innish Ruary on the North by the Parliamentary Road. Comprising Blain Moss the part of Dalnabreck and Langall South of the Parliamentary Road Dalilea, Coul, Glenmoidart Also part of Kinlochmoidart and Gasgan.

**Blain Moss**

1

John McDonald H M 36 Agricultural Labourer Inv Moidart  
Isabella McDonald W M 34 Inv Glenuig  
Angus McDonald S 3 Inv Moidart  
Margaret McDonald D 2 Inv Moidart  
(One window)

2

Archibald McDonald H M 40 Mason Inv Elenshona  
Mary McDonald W M 34 Inv Ellenshona  
Margaret McDonald D 6 Scholar Inv Moidart  
John McDonald S 5 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Angus McDonald S 3 Inv Moidart  
Isabella McDonald D 1 Inv Moidart  
(One window)

3

Janet McDonald H U 36 Dressmaker Inv Kinlochmoidart  
(One window)

4

Mary McDonald H W 51 Domestic Servant Inv Moidart  
(One window)

5

Archibald McDonald H M 40 Shoemaker Inv Kinlochmoidart  
Flora McDonald W M 35 Inv Egg  
Alexander McDonald 14 Cow Herd Inv Moidart  
Charles McDonald 10 Scholar Inv Moidart

Margaret McDonald D 9 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Joanna McDonald D 7 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Flora McDonald D 5 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Ann McDonald D 3 Inv Moidart  
Angus McDonald S 2 Inv Moidart

(Two windows)

6

Angus Kinnaird H M 84 Ag Lab Inv Arisaig  
Catherine Kinnaird Sis U 64 Grocer Inv Arisaig

7

Alexander McDonald H M 56 Inspector of Poor Inv Fort Augustus  
Margaret McDonald S M 53 Inv Inverness  
Margaret McDonald D U 18 Inv Glenmoriston  
Alexander McDonald S U 13 Inv Glenmoriston  
Duncan McDonald S 11 Scholar Inv Glenmoriston

(Five windows)

8

Dugald McDonald H M 40 Ag Lab Inv Arisaig  
Ann McDonald W M 40 Inv Glenuig  
Allan McDonald S 11 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Ewan McDonald S 11 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Mary McDonald D 7 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Ann McDonald D 5 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Margaret McDonald D 2 Inv Moidart

(Five windows)

9

Mary Corbet H W 70 Formerly Domestic Servant Inv Glenuig  
Allan Corbet S U 40 Ag Lab Inv Arisaig  
Margaret Cameron D W 36 Domestic Servant Inv Moidart  
Norman Corbet S U 34 Ag Lab Inv Moidart  
William Corbet S U 32 Ag Lab Inv Moidart  
Jane Corbet D U 30 Domestic Servant Inv Moidart  
Sarah Cameron G/D 13 Arg. Aharacle Inv Moidart

(Two windows)

10

John McDonald H M 38 Ag Lab Inv Moidart  
Micy McDonald W M 36 Inv Kilminock  
Charlot McDonald 11 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Ann McDonald D 9 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Margaret McDonald D 5 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Cursty McDonald D 4 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Angus McDonald S 11m Inv Moidart

(Three windows)

11

John McGregor H M 50 Agricultural Labourer Inv Elenshona  
Joanna McGregor W M 36 Renfrew Greenock

Maryann McGregor D 13 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Dugald McGregor S 11 Scholar Inv Moidart  
James McGregor S 9 Scholar Inv Moidart  
Ann McGregor D 5 Inv Moidart  
Peter McGregor S 3 Inv Moidart  
Alexander McGregor S 2 Inv Moidart  
(Two windows)

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12

***(In the original there is a short line, but it is a separate entry. JC)***

Jane McGregor H U 48 Dom Serv Inv Moidart  
Peter McLaurin S U 16 Ag Lab Perthshire Athole  
(one window)

13

Donald McMillan H M 50 Ag Lab Inv Barra  
Sarah McMillan W M 52 Inv Kilmallie  
Sarah McMillan D 11 Scholar Inv Moidart  
(Two windows)

14

Archibald McDonald H M 72 Ag Lab Arg Aharacle  
Jane McDonald W M 66 Arg Aharacle  
Alexander McDonald S U 32 Arg Aharacle  
Allan McDonald S U 28 Arg Aharacle  
Margaret McDonald D U 26 Dom Serv Inv Moidart  
Angus McDonald N U 26 Ag Lab Lanarks Glasgow  
Jane McDonald G/D U 16 Dom Serv. Inv Moidart  
(Three windows)

### **Dalnabreac**

15

Alexander McDonald H U 40 Ag Lab  
Flora McDonald Sis U 33 Dom Serv  
Jane McDonald N U 18 Dom Servt  
Margett McPherson V U 60 Dom Servt  
(Three windows. All Inv Moidart)  
**(Family is Deeke(15) in the 1881 Census)**

16

Mary McMaster H W 68 Formerly Dom Servt Inv. Glenuig  
Flora McMaster D U 28 Dom Servt Inv Moidart  
(Two windows)

17

Isabella McEachen H W 60 Formerly Dom Servt Inv. Glenuig  
Margaret McMaster D U 28 Dom Servt Inv. Elenshona  
John McMaster S U 26 Ag Lab Inv. Elenshona  
Donald McDonald G/S 8 Scholar Inv. Moidart  
(Two windows)

This district lies along the South side of Lochshiel up to the march of Glenaladale, then across North a considerable hill the shortest way to Glenmoidart and comes down through that glen and embracing part of Kinlochmoidart at nine miles which cannot embrace the distance across the hill and through Glenmoidart down to Kinlochmoidart Bridge where the last house in the district is. The first visited being within a quarter of a mile from Shielbridge.

## 1881 Census

### Enumeration District: 5

**County:** Inverness      **Registration District:** Aharacle

Part of the Quoad Sacra Parish of Aharacle bounded on the West by the River Shiel, on the South by the Parliamentary Road and straight line from Mingary Burn to Loch Moidart. Comprising Blain, Blainard, Mingary, Portavait, Shonaveg, Eillanshona, Dorlin, Shielfishing and Cliff Farm.

Temporary Absent: None

Temporary Present: None

### **Civil Parish of Ardnamurchan and Quoad Sacra Parish of Acharacle**

Checked by Alexander Henderson

**Enumerator:** Duncan Cameron (11/4/1881)

**Registrar:** James MacKay (11/4/1881)

**Sheriff-Clerk:** Duncan MacKenzie Sh Cl Dep (sic) (27/4/1881)

Village or Hamlet of Moidart: 182 Houses inhabited – 1 Uninhab. 41 Males 59 Females. Windowed Rooms: 113 (98)

Village or Hamlet of Eilanshona: 19 Houses inhabited. 46 Males 57 Females. Windowed Rooms: 63

Village or Hamlet of Kinlochmoidart: 2 Houses inhabited. 9 Males 6 Females. Windowed rooms: 5

Shiel Fishing: 1 - 6

Cliff: 7

Blain: 8

Blain Ard: 9 - 10

### Mingary

11

John McLellan H M 56 Joiner Inv. Morar

Catherine McLellan W M 47 Inv Glengarry

John McLellan S U 22 Joiner Inv Muidart

Archy Keith McLellan S 10 Scholar Inv Muidart

James Alexr McLellan S 6 Scholar Inv Muidart

Ann McLellan D 8 Scholar Inv Moidart

Mary(?) McDonald G/D 1 Arg Morvern

(Three windows. All G)

12

Ambrose Griffith H M 49 Manager over Roads ?? Donegall Ireland

Jane Griffith W M 39 Newcastle England

Ambrose Griffith S U 17 Gen Lab Inv Muidart

Duglas Griffith S U 14 Scholar Inv Muidart  
Belle Griffith D 12 Scholar Inv Muidart  
Josph (sic) Griffith S 9 Scholar Inv Muidart  
Jessie Griffith D 7 Scholar Inv Muidart  
Helen Griffith D 5 Scholar Inv Muidart  
John Griffith S 4 Inv Muidart  
Agness (sic) Griffith D 1 Inv Muidart  
(Two windows. All G)

13

Jessie McPherson H W 75 Housekeeper  
Mary Ann McPherson D U 36 Teacher  
(Two windows. Both Arg Ard Both G)

14

Charles McDonald H U 45 Roman Catholic Priest Inv Inverness  
Alexr Babes N 5 Scholar Lanarks Glasgow  
Angus McDonald Serv. 14 Farm Servant Inv Muidart  
Annie McDonald Serv U 16 General Servant Inv Muidart  
Catherine McDonald Serv. U (2?)8 Housekeeper Inv Muidart  
(Seven windows.)

Partavait: 15

**End of Loch Shiel Estate**

Shona veg: 16 - 17

Eillanshona: 18 - 37

**End of Estate of Eilleanshona**

Dorlin: 38 - 40

Fishing Station House 1u

**End of district**

Schedules:

pp1 – 4 & 9 Moidart (*Shiel Fishing, Cliff, Blain, Mingarry and Portavata JC*)

pp5 – 9 Eilean Shona

pp8 Kinlochmoidart, Shonaveg

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**District 6**

Part of the Quoad Sacra Parish of Acharacle bounded on the West by Lochsheil on the South by Glenaladale and Gasgan burn, that is to say the Burn of Gasgan running between the Estate of Lochsheil and Glenaladale on the East by Innish Ruary Burn and Asary and on the North by the bridge on the Parliamentary Road at Kinlochmoidart Square. Comprising Blain Moss, Deek, Dalnambreck, Langall, Dalilea, Cuil, Gasgan, Asary, Glenforslan, Glenmoidart and Upper part of Kinlochmoidart.

**Enumerator:** Hugh McNaughton (13/4/1881)

**Registrar:** James MacKay (13/4/1881)

**Sheriff-Clerk:** Duncan MacKenzie Sh Cl Dep (sic) (27/4/1881)

Temporary Absent: Tenant Glenmoidart - 1M+2F Taking Home Sheep - 1M Manager Kinlochmoidart  
– 1M

Temporary Present: Tailor 1M

Hamlet of Moidart: 25 Houses 1 Building. 62 Males 69 Females. Windowed Rooms: 71

Hamlet of Kinlochmoidart: 8 Houses. 16 Males 18 Females. Windowed Rooms: 21

Hamlet of Glenmoidart: 4 Houses. 12 Males 8 Females. Windowed Rooms: 31

**Blain Moss:** 1 -12

**Mingary?**

13

Alexr McDonald H M 34 Mason

Margaret McDonald W M 30

Mary McDonald D 7 Scholar

Angus McDonald S 5 Scholar

Chirsty McDonald D 4

John McDonald S 2

(Five windows. All Inv Muidart and G.)

14

John McDonald H M 60 Gamekeeper Inv Arisaig

Flora McDonald W M 55 Inv Muidart

Dugald McDonald S U 23 Gamekeeper Inv Muidart

Ann McDonald D U 21 Serv. Inv Muidart

John McDonald S 14 Labr Inv Muidart

Cathrin McDonald G/D 7 Scholar Inv Muidart

Hugh Mackay G/S 3 Lanarks Glasgow

(Three windows. All G.)

**(First year at Mingary – previously Dalilea)**

**Deek**

15

Alexr McDonald H U 54 Crofter Inv Muidart

Flora McDonald Sis U 45 Housekeeper Inv Muidart

(Two windows. Both G.)

16

Dugald McDonald H W 66 Crofter InvMuidart

Angus McDonald S U 31 Labr Inv Muidart

William McDonald S U 29 Labr Inv Muidart

Bella McDonald D U 24 Housekeeper Inv Eilean Shona

(Two windows. All G)

Dalnabreck: 17 -18

Langal: 19

Dalilea: 20-23

Cuil: 24

Gasgan: 25

**End of the Estate of Lochshiel Dorlin**

Kinlochmoidart: 26 - 31

Glenforslan: 32



Asary: 33

**End of the Estate of Kinlochmoidart**

Glenmoidart: 34 – 37

**End of the Estate of Glenmoidart**

**1891 Census**

**District 1**

Part of the Civil Parish of Ardnamurchan and of the Quoad Sacra Parish of Aharacle and School Board District of Aharacle. Bounded on the East by Camusblain Burn and Ben Resipole on the South by Straight Line from Ben Resipole to Lochan Na Highinn on the West by straight line from Lochan na Highinn to Lochan na Corra on the North by CrossRoads at Aharacle Church and Parliamentary Road to the Milestone at Dalnambreck burn falling into Loch Shiel and thence Loch Shiel to Camusblain Burn. Comprising Auchnanellan, Clach, Ardshellach, Aharacle, Blain Moss, Part of Mingarry, Deek and Knochd Breac.

**Enumerator:** John Cameron (15/4/1891)

**Registrar:** James MacKay (15/4/1891)

**Sheriff Clerk:** Dun. MacKenzie (5/5/1891)

**Estate of Locheil(sic)**

Hamlet of Mingary: 15 Houses Inhabited. 35 Males 36 Females Windowed Rooms: 33 G/E 31 – G 37

Aharacle: 1 to 21

Ardshellach: 22 to 23

Achnanellan: 24

**Deek**

25

Dugald McDonald H W 76 Crofter Inv Mingary G/E

Peter McLaren S/L M 36 Wire Fencer Perth G/E

Bella McDonald D M 33 Inv Eilean Shona G/E

Annie McLaren G/Dm 4m Inv Mingary

26

Alexr McDonald H U 80 Crofter Inv Langal G

Flora McDonald S U 74 Inv Langal G

**Mingary**

27

John McDonald H M 86 Retired Gamekeeper Inv Arisaig G/E

Flora McDonald W M 63 Inv Langal G

Annie McDonald D U 29 Domestic Serv Inv Moidart G/E

Hugh Mackay G/S 13 Scholar Bathgate Linlithgow

(Three windows)

28

Alex McDonald H M 42 Crofter Mason Inv Dalnabreac G/E

Margaret McDonald W M 46 Inv Moss G/E  
Angus McDonald S U 16 Scholar Inv Moss G/E  
Christina McDonald D 14 Scholar Inv Moss G/E  
John McDonald S 12 Scholar Inv Mingary G/E  
Archd McDonald S 10 Scholar Inv Mingary G/E  
Henry McDonald S 8 Scholar Inv Mingary G/E  
Sandy McDonald S 6 Scholar Inv Mingary G/E  
Flora McDonald D 4 Scholar Inv Mingary G  
(Four windows)

29.

John McDonald H M 33 Crofter G Blind  
Catherine McDonald W M 31 G  
Bella McDonald D U 17  
Mary Ann McDonald D 15 Scholar  
Sarah McDonald Relative U 26 Serv  
(All Inv Moidart and all G/E)  
(Two windows)  
End of Part of Hamlet of Mingary.

Blain Moss: 30 to 39  
End of Enumeration District Number 1.

## **District 2**

**County:** Argyll and Inverness **Registration District:** Aharacle

Part of the Civil Parish of Ardnamurchan and of the Quoad Sacra Parish of Aharacle. Bounded on the East by Mingary Burn, on the South by the Parliamentary Road to the Cross Roads at aharacle Established Church, on the West by Road to Kintrae to Uamhachaorinn and Loch Kintrae, on the North by Atlantic Ocean, Loch Moidart, River shiel to Shielbridge, Camusdorcha Fountain?, there by straight line to Blain Ard and to Mingary Burn. Comprising, Aharacle, New Crofts, Ardtoe Crofts, Gobshealach, Ardtoe, Newton, Shielfoot, Shielside and Shielbridge, Blain, Mingary and Blain Ard.

**Enumerator:** James MacKay – 13/4/1891

**Registrar:** James MacKay – 13/4/1891

**Sheriff Clerk:** Dun MacKenzie – 5/5/1891

Part of the Estate of Lochshiel: 5 Houses Inhabited. 10 Males 11 Females Windowed Rooms: 15

Aharacle New Crofts: 1 – 2  
Ardtoe Crofts: 3 – 5  
Gobsheallach: 7  
Ardtoe: 8 – 14  
Newton: 15-25  
Shielfoot 26 – 39  
Shielfoot Shielside: 40 - 44  
Shielfoot Shielbridge: 45  
End of County of Argyll  
Blain: 46

## Mingary

47

John MacLellan H M 62 Joiner Inv North Morar  
Catherine McLellan W M 55 Inv Invergarry  
Archibald McLellan S U 21 Inv Mingary  
James McLellan S U 17 Farming Inv Mingary  
Mary McLellan G/D 10 Scholar Arg Drimnin  
Sandy McDonald B/L U 40 Fisherman Inv Blain  
(Three windows. All G/E)

48

Eliza Allan H U 27 Schoolmistress England  
Louisa Allan Sis U 20 England  
(Four windows)

49

Charles McDonald H U 56 Roman Catholic Priest officiating in  
Moidart at St Marys Mingary and St. Agnes, Gleniug Inv Inverness (G/E)  
Richard Babes V M 56? Wine & Spirit Merchant Lanarks. Glasgow  
William Corbett Serv U 54? Farm Servant Inv Moidart (G/E)  
Catherine McDonald Serv U 43 Domestic Servant Inv Moidart (G/E)  
Mary McDonald Serv. U 17 General Dom. Servant Inv Moidart (G/E)  
(Eight windows)

Blain Ard: 50 - 51

## **End of the Enumeration District No 2**

*(No comments at end. JC)*

## 1901 Census

### District 5

County of Inverness Parish Quoad Sacra of Arisaig and Moidart. Quoad Sacra Parish of Acharacle and School Board District of Acharacle. Bounded on the East by road from Lochmoidart to the Bridge on the Parliamentary Road on said burn, on the South by Parliamentary Road to the old Bridge on the River Shiel on the West by River Shiel and Lochmoidart to the road across the hill to Mingary Bridge. Comprising Blain, Mingary, Portavata, Dorlin Farm, Shiel fishery, Dorlin, Eilean Shona and Shona Veg or as it is called now Invermoidart.

**Enumerator:** Ewan Allan McDonald (8/4/1901)

**Registrar:** James MacKay (9/4/1901)

**Sheriff Clerk:** Dun MacKenzie Dep (27/4/1901)

Parish of Arisaig and Moidart:

35 Houses Inhabited 4 Houses Uninhabited 1 Building 74 Males 80 Females Windowed Rooms: 246

Dorlin: 1 - 9

Blain House: 10

Joiner's House

11

Catherine McLellan H W 67 Inv. Glengarry (G/E)

John McLellan S Single 42 Joiner Inv. Moidart (G/E)

James McLellan S Single 28 Joiner Inv. Moidart (G/E)

Mary McDonald G/D Single 20 Servant Arg. Lochaline (G/E)

Catherine McGuirk Boarder Single 11 Scholar Lanarkshire Glasgow

James Crombie Boarder Single 19 Joiner Stirling

Robert Wright Boarder Single 26 Joiner Stirling

(Three windows)

School House

12

Katherine Edmondson H U 50 Teacher England Lancs Manchester E

(Four windows)

Chapel House

13

John McIntosh N U 27 Sailor Inv. Kilmonivaig

Ann McIntosh N U 14 Scholar Inv. Moidart

Bella McDonald Servant U 26 Housekeeper and Servant Inv. Moidart

(Seven windows)

Portavata: 14

End of Lochshiel Estate

*(No report at end. Shona Veg and Eilean Shona follow in same district – JC)*

**Enumeration District 7**

County of Inverness of Quod Sacra parish of Acharacle and School Board District of Acharacle bounded on the east side by Inish Ruary burn an a straight line to Gasken burn march between the Estates of Glenaladale and Loch Shiel, on the south by Loch Shiel, on the west by River Shiel to the old bridge on the Parliamentary road to the bridge at Kinlochmoidart and by road from said bridge to the saw mill and thence to Innes Ruary comprising Moss Park of Mingarry Deeke. Part of Dalnabreac. Part of Langal, Dalilea, Gaskan, Asary, Glenforslan, Glenmoidart and part of Kinlochmoidart.

**Enumerator:** John MacKintosh (10/4/1901)

**Registrar:** James MacKay (10/4/1901)

**Sheriff Clerk:** Dun MacKenzie Dep? (6/4/1901)

Arisaig and Moidart:

Houses Inhabited 31 Unihabited 0 Building 0 Males 71 Females 75 Windowed Rooms 96

Blain Moss: 1 – 10

**Deeke**

11

John McDonald H M 77 Ploughman retired Inv. Moidart G/E

Mary McDonald W M 56 Inv. Moidart G/E

Angus McDonald S U 19 Farm Lab Inv. Moidart G/E  
Mary McDonald D U 20 Gen Serv Dom Inv. Moidart G/E  
John McDonald S 17 Farm Lab Inv. Moidart G/E  
Kate McDonald D 16 Inv. Moidart -  
(Shown for the above and the following entry 'Dumb from Childhood)  
Flora McDonald D 12 Inv Moidart -  
Ranald McDonald S 11 Scholar Inv. Moidart G/E  
Mary Connery Boarder 11 Edinburgh -  
Ann Connery Boarder 9 Glasgow -  
(Three windows)

12  
Peter MacLaren H M 48 Mason's Lab  
Isabella McLaren W M 40  
Ann McLaren D 10 Scholar  
Peter McLaren S 7 Scholar  
Marjory McLaren D 6 Scholar  
(Three windows. All Inv. Moidart. All G/E)

Dalnabreac: 13  
Langall: 14  
Dalilea: 15 – 17  
Gasgan: 18  
Assary: 19  
Glenforsland(sic): 20  
Glenmoidart: 21  
Kinlochmoidart: 22 – 28

29 Mingary  
Flora McDonald H W 76 Crofter Worker at house on own account G  
Henry McDonald S U 48 Joiner G/E  
Ann McDonald D U 38 Domestic Servant G/E  
(Five windows. All Inv. Moidart)

30 Mingary  
Margaret McDonald H W 52 Crofter own account at home  
Angus McDonald S U 26 Mason Worker  
Alex McDonald S U 16 Postman Worker  
Flora McDonald D 14 Scholar  
(Three windows. All Inv. Moidart G/E)

31 Mingary  
Catherine McDonald H W 60 Crofter own account at home G  
Alexander McDonald S U 30 Farm Servant Worker G/E  
Isabella McDonald D U 27 Servant Domestic - G/E  
(Three windows. All Inv. Moidart)

**End of District 7**

*(No comments at end. JC)*



**Appendix III**  
**Valuation Roll Extracts for Mingarry and Neighbouring Area**  
**Parish of Ardnamurchan, Inverness**

Transcribed by Jean Lawson at Inverness Archives 22/01/08

**1869/70**

PLACE	PROPRIETOR	OCCUPIER	VALUATION
Langall	James Robert Hope-Scott	Angus MacDonald	£10
		Angus McIsaac	£10
		Alexander MacDonald Snr.	£10
		John MacDonald	£10
Dalnabreck		Ronald McIsaac	£12
		John MacDonald, Weaver	£6
		Archibald McIsaac	£6
		John MacKillaig	£6
		Alexander McVarish	£6
Moss		Alexander McDonald	£5
		Archibald MacDonald	£6
		Widow Corbet	£4 13 4
		Dougald MacDonald	£4
Deek		Alexander MacDonald Jnr	£4
Cliff etc.		William Johnston	£150

**1870/71**

Langall	James Robert Hope-Scott	Angus MacDonald	£10
		Angus McIsaac	£10
		Alexander MacDonald Snr	£10
		John MacDonald	£10
Dalnabreck		Ronald McIsaac	£12
		John MacDonald, Weaver	£6
		Archibald McIsaac	£6
		John MacKillaig	£4
		Alexander McVarish	£4
Moss		Alexander MacDonald	£5
		Archibald MacDonald	£6

	Widow Corbet	£4 13 4
	Dougald MacDonald	£4
	John MacGregor	£4 5 0
Deek	Alexander MacDonald Jnr	£4
Mingarry	William Johnston	£150
Small crofts under £4		£14 16 4

PLACE	PROPRIETOR	OCCUPIER	VALUATION
<b>1871/2</b>			
The same as 1870/71 except for the following valuations:			
Dalnabreck		Ronald McIsaac	£12 1 6
		Alexander McVarish	£4 6 8
		John MacKillaig	£4 6 8
Small crofts			£15 19 4

<b>1872/3</b>			
Langall	Lord Howard of Glossop	Angus MacDonald	£10
		Angus McIsaac	£10
		Alexander McIsaac Snr	£10
		John MacDonald	£10
Dalnabreck		Ronald McIsaac	£12
		John MacDonald, Weaver	£6
		Archibald McIsaac	£6
		John MacKillaig	£4 6 8
		Alexander McVarish	£4 6 8
Moss		Alexander MacDonald	£5 15 6
		Archibald MacDonald	£6
		Widow Corbet	£4 13 4
		Dougald MacDonald	£4 0 6
		John MacGregor	£4 5 0
Deek		Alexander MacDonald Jnr	£4
Mingarry		William Johnston	£150
Small crofts			£15 19 4



**1873/4**

Langall	Lord Howard of Glossop	Angus MacDonald	£10
		Angus McIsaac	£10
		John MacDonald	£10
Dalnabreck		Ronald McIsaac	£12 1 6
		John MacDonald, Weaver	
		Archibald McIsaac	£6
		John MacKillaig	£4 6 8
		Alexander McVarish	£4 6 8
Moss		Alexander MacDonald	£5 15 6
		Archibald MacDonald	£6
		Widow Corbet	£4 13 4
		Dougald MacDonald	£4
		John McGregor	£4 5 0
Deek		Alexander MacDonald Jnr	£4
Mingarry		Proprietor	£150

PLACE	PROPRIETOR	OCCUPIER	VALUATION
	Lord Howard of Glossop		

**1874/5**

Small Crofts	As Previous Year Except for:		£17 9 4
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**1875/6**

Small Crofts	As Previous Year Except for:		£15 19 4
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**1876/7**

Langall	As Previous Year Except for:	Allan MacDonald Snr	£10
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**1877/8**

As Previous Year

**1878/9**

As Previous Year except for Moss, where Peter MacDonald replaces Alexander MacDonald, at £5 15 6

**1879/80**

As Previous Year except that Widow Corbet is replaced by Allan Corbet at Moss £4 13 4  
 Allan MacDonald is no longer at Langall  
 Deek Archibald MacDonald, Mason £6  
 Small Crofts £11 4 0

**1880/1**

Missing from book

**1881/2**

As most of the nearby tenants change very little in the Valuations only details of Mingarry and anything explanatory are given here . The 1885/6 list has also been given to act as a comparison with earlier years.

Mingarry House	Proprietor	£150
Cottage & Croft, Mingarry	Alexander MacDonald, mason	£6
Deek	Alexander MacDonald Jnr	£4

1882/3

Mingarry	Proprietor	£150
Cottage & Croft, Mingarry	Alexander MacDonald, Mason	£6

1883/4

Mingarry House	Proprietor	£150
Cottage & Croft, Mingarry	Alexander MacDonald	£6

1884/5

Lands, Mingarry	Proprietor	£150
Cottage & Croft, Mingarry	Alexander MacDonald	£6
Croft, Mingarry	John MacDonald Jnr	£4 10
0		
Deek	Allan MacDonald	£6

**1885/6**

PLACE	PROPRIETOR	OCCUPIER	VALUATION
Langall	Lord Howard of Glossop	?Simon MacDonald	£10
		Angus MacDonald, Tailor	£10
		John A, MacDonald	£10
		John E. MacDonald	£10
		Donald Cameron, Inspector of Poor	£4 16
0			
Dalnabreck		Ronald R. MacDonald	£6
		John ?A MacDonald	£6

	John MacDonald, Weaver	£6
	Donald "Ban" MacDonald	£6
	John MacKellaig	£4 6 8
	Alexander McVarish	£4 6 8
Moss	Peter MacDonald	£6
	Allan MacDonald	£6
	Allan Corbet	£4 13
4	Dougald MacDonald	£4
	John MacGregor	£4
Deek	Alexander MacDonald Jnr	£4
Mingarry	Alexander MacDonald, Mason	£6
	John MacDonald Jnr	£4 10 0
House & Farm, Mingarry	Proprietor	£150
1886/7		
Mingarry	Alexander MacDonald, Mason	£6
	John MacDonald Jnr	££6
House & Land, Mingarry	Proprietor	£150
Austin House & Croft, Mingarry	Proprietor	£?
House & Land Mingarry	John MacDonald Snr Gamekeeper	£0 1 0
1887/8		
Mingarry	Alexander MacDonald, Mason	£7
	John MacDonald Jnr	£4 10 0
House & Farm Mingarry	Proprietor	£150
Austin House & Croft	Proprietor	£10
House & Land	John MacDonald Snr Gamekeeper	£0 1 0
1888/9		
Mingarry	Alexander MacDonald	£7
	John MacDonald Jnr	£410 0
House & Farm, Mingarry	Proprietor	£150
Austin House & Croft	Proprietor	£10
House & land	Dougald MacDonald	£4 10
0		
1889/90		
	As previous year except that John MacDonald Jnr's holding valued at	£4 19 3