

Letter sent to Donald MacKay in May 1840.

Addressed:- Prepaid No 1000.

Envelope marked with metal
stamp "Paid May 19N
1840.

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Donald Mackay Corporal
93 Regiment
Light Company
Toronto Upper Canada,
North America

or elsewhere

At this time Great Grandfather was stationed to Drummondville and the letter was forwarded to that place Postage Stamps came into use shortly after this date.

"Dear Brother

Old Birichen May 15, 1840.

I have wrote you a long letter about six months ago, & received no answer, but I believe that you never received it, I have told you some important news in that letter, & now write this second one, which I hope will come to your hand at any rate, in this one you cannot get much news, not, that (I) have not any to give, but that I have so much that I do not know how to begin, till such time as I shall hear from you, I have indeed, so much news, of the most important & strange kind to give, as much as would fill a volume, I will only tell that my troubles, & that of my dear wife, was for the last twelve month beyond expression, & all this spring from the most unnatural conduct of that awful fellow John, & I am sorry to say his wretchedly foolish mother followed his steps, I know that you had respect for your mother, but I venter to say from what I know of your decency & respect for your sister who lies in my bosom, that suppose you would this day come to the Parish of Dornoch, that as sure as the sun shines you would not pass a night or a day at Rierche, I told you in the former letter of the death your father & sister at Lewes, on which I will not enlarge here, also how that my wife was confined to a sick bed, during 9 months, that there were little hopes of her recovery, that yet at the end of her sickness, she was delivered of a fine boy, whom we had called after your name, & little Donald is now about a year old, my wife's tender & loving attachment to you, & you being also the only person from whom decency might be expected as a connection, who if he would come back to his native land, might cast a warm eye on the child (if spared) even after my death, these things led me to the willing resolution of calling the child by your name, though at present you had been over the sea & far away.

I ought to tell you though our trouble had been without a precedent in the annals of Sutherland, that hitherto the almighty arms has been about us in such a wonderful manner, that as yet we have great reason to be thankful though we are not sure yet how matters will end at last, but to give a sgetch of our affais &

troubles would nearly require a quire of paper, the most of which must forever remain in oblivion to you, unless unscrutable providence may yet give us an opportunity of seeing one another yet in the flesh, but alas! alas! for you & for us if we both do not make it our chief care & concern that whither we live, we live unto the Lord, & whither we die, we die unto the Lord that whither living or dieing we may be the Lord's

Amen

I expect a large, a very large letter from you in return, do not be grieved with the gloomy affairs at home, only tell us your opinion of them, that we may know your mind freely concerning ourselves, whether you sympathize with us or not, as you feel yourself inclined, give us a little sgetch of your own personal concerns since you went there, also some description of that place & its inhabitants what encouragement is there for emigrants, would you like to remain there, are you well in it, or can you spare anything in it, are you better than you would be in the army in Scotland. Lord Rusel is preparing a plan to be law before Parliament for encouraging emigration on a large scale from the highlands to the Canada's, & it is probable if it will pass unto a law that they shall go there next year from the north by hundreds, what would be your opinion of that but I must desist, the children is putting in their claim of share of my letter to be remembered to you as well as their mother, who joins me in the best wishes for you by this letter, your friend

Duncan Ross MacKay

John Torran & his family is going to Canada this summer perhaps you will see him if you be on the look out, if you happen to see him he can tell you all about us

be sure to write without any delay & as often as you can ^{or} perhaps in my ~~next~~ next I shall be more free to give you a long story of the affairs at home.