

Catharine McLean's birth

March 2022

Our main source about Catharine is the minutes of the Kirk Sessions (appendix E) which did not specify her age, place of birth, or parents.

A search in Scotland's People yielded seven possible OPRs:- It is assumed that she was born in the North Knapdale parish – rather than in any other parish. It is also assumed that the birth was registered and appears on the Scotland's People website - but note, for example, Catharine did not register her own daughter until five years after that birth.

Births of Catharine McLean in North Knapdale						
	Date	Place	Father	Mother	Age in July 1833	Appendix
Catharine	12/02/1820		John McLean	Flora McLean	13	
Catharine	13/03/1819	Keil	John McLean	Ann Baxter	14	C
Catharine	05/05/1816	Cosandrochaid	John McLean	Sarah McGugan	17	A
Catharine	21/09/1814	Barbreck	Allan McLean McLean	18	B
Katharine	27/01/1809	Kilmahumaig	Lachlen MacLean	Catharine Munn	24	D
Katharine	13/05/1803		Malcolm McLean	More McMillan	30	
Katharine	05/10/1794		Donald McLean	More McLarty	38	

From this list, one stands out:-

5th May 1816 in Cosandrochaid with parents John McLean and Sarah McGugan

- Year: This would make her 17 years old when she became pregnant. Other OPRs would have made her 13 years, 14, 18, 24 or older.
- Place:
 - Cosandrochaid is within Tayvallich - a 11 km walk southwest from Bellanoch where Catharine became pregnant.
 - Tayvallich was where the Kirk Sessions was held when Catharine made her complaint. At that time, she was 17 years old and she was living in Arichonan, which is half way between Cosandrochaid and Bellanoch.
 - The localities of the other OPRs are discounted - Keil (103 kms south of Bellanoch), Barbreck (20 km walk north of Bellanoch) or Kilmahumaig (just 2 kms northwest of Bellanoch)
- Father: The father makes sense because John acted on her behalf to get Allan to sign the letter admitting he was the father. It would have been further confirmation if the OPR had noted him as inn-keeper or merchant.
- Mother: Catharine might have named her daughter, Sarah, after her mother.

..ooOoo..

Catharine McLean, bapt 5th May 1816 in Cosandrochaid

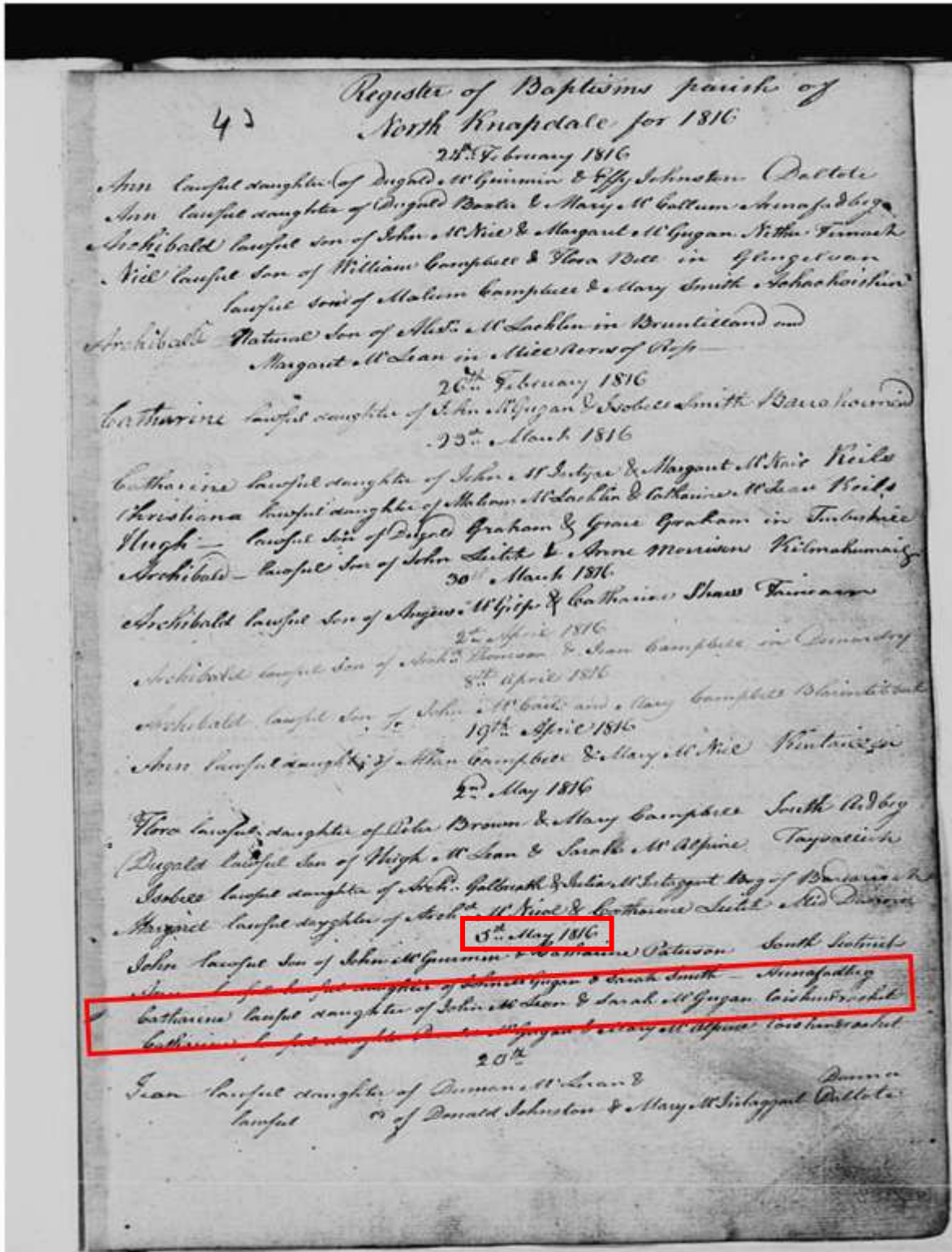
"5th May 1816 Catharine lawful daughter of John McLean & Sarah McGugan Cosandrochaid, North Knapdale"

Source: Scotland's People, NRS, OPRs Births 530/ 10 136 North Knapdale page 136

05/05/1816 MCLEAN, CATHARINE (Old Parish Registers Births 530/ 10 136 North Knapdale) Page 136 of

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Catharine McLean, born 21st Sept 1814 in Barbreck

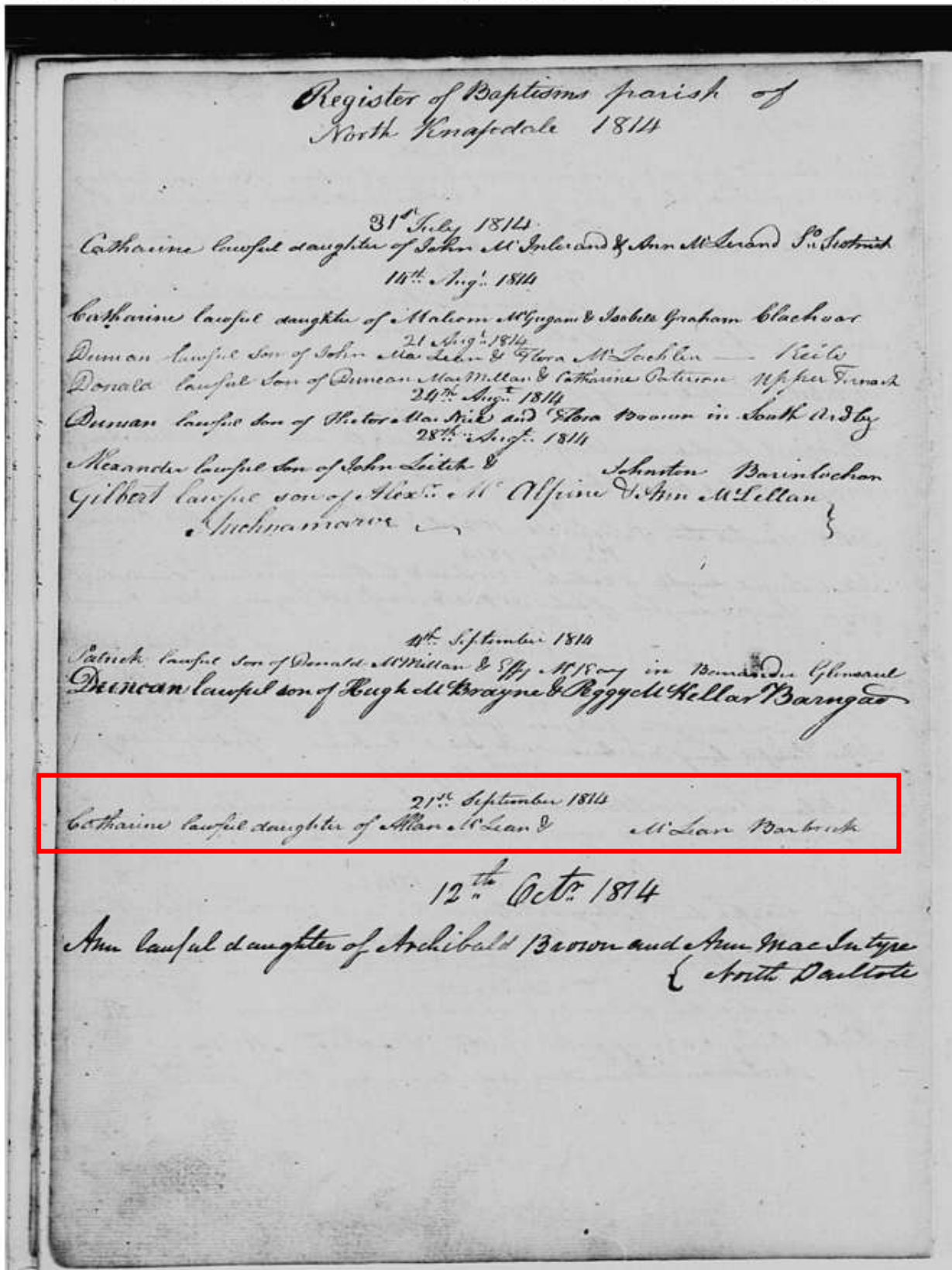
"21st September 1814, Catharine McLean lawful daughter Allan McLean & McLean Barbreck"

Source: Scotland's People, NRS, OPR births 530/ 10 128 North Knapdale, page 129

21/09/1814 MCLEAN, CATHARINE (Old Parish Registers Births 530/ 10 129 North Knapdale) Page 129 of

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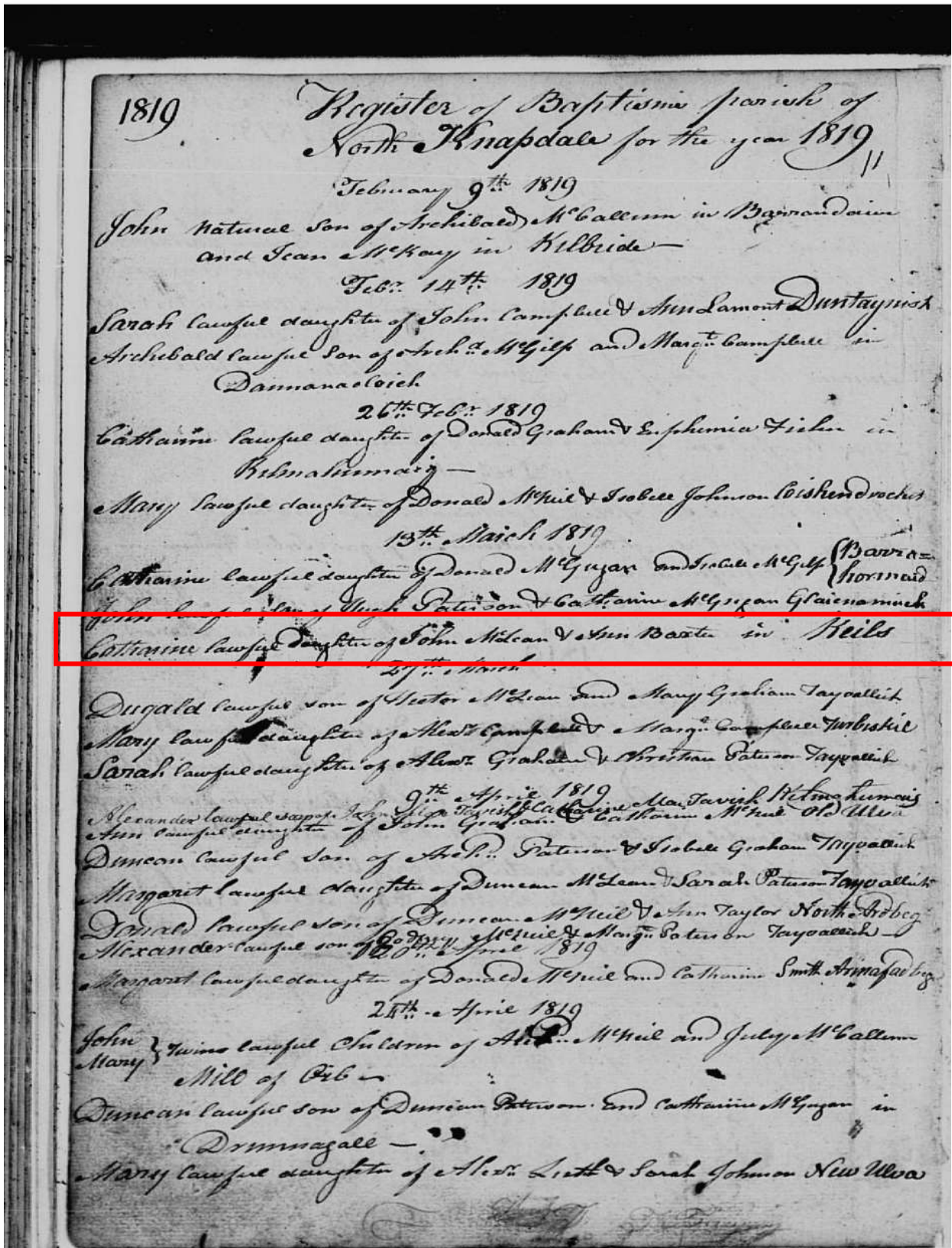
Catharine McLean baptized on 13th March 1819 in Keil

"13th March 1819 - Catharine lawful daughter of John McLean & Ann Booth in Keils"

Source: Scotland's People, NRS, OPR births 530/ 10 147, North Knapdale, page 147.

13/03/1819 MCLEAN, CATHARINE (Old Parish Registers Births 530/ 10 147 North Knapdale) Page 147 of 211

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Katharine MacLean baptized 27th January 1809 in Kilmahumaig

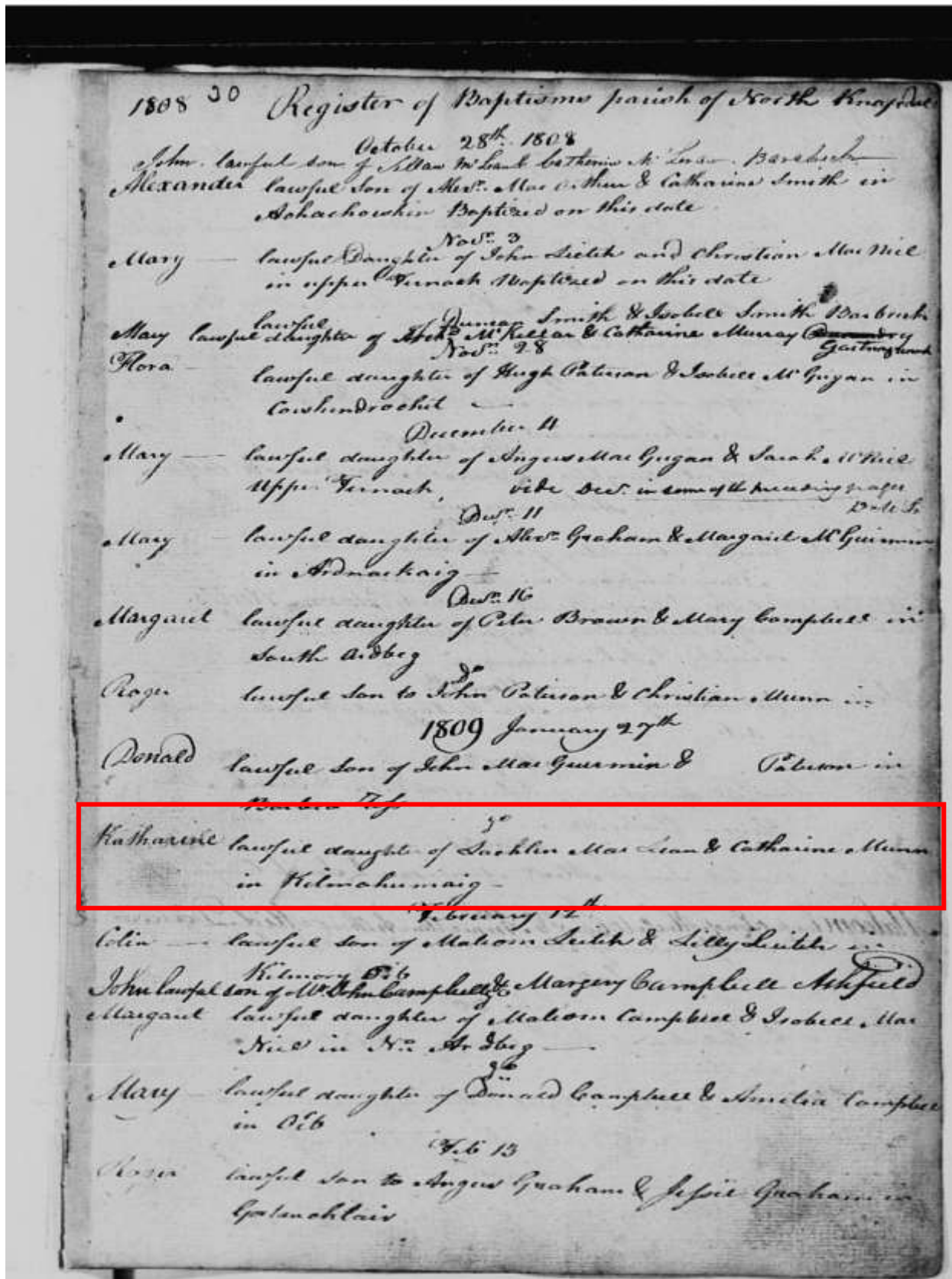
"1809 January 27th - Katharine lawful daughter of Lachlan MacLean & Catharine Munn"

Source: Scotland's People, NRS, OPR births 530/ 10 page 110, North Knapdale

27/01/1809 MACLEAN, KATHARINE (Old Parish Registers Births 530/ 10 110 North Knapdale) Page 110 of

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Catharine McLean's complaint against Allan McLean regarding the child, Sarah, who was born in 1834

Minutes of North Knapdale Kirk sessions at Tayvallich on 23rd Jan 1837

Source: Page 14 of Kilmallie minutes on 29th Feb 1837 - Scotland's People, Virtual Volumes, CH2/719/00001-00025

Eoderm die?? The moderator laid before the session a letter from the session clerk of the Parish of North Knapdale dated the 23rd instant, enclosing the following extract.

At Tayvillich [Tayvallich] 22nd January 1837, the Kirk Session of North Knapdale being met and constituted, sederunt The Rev Don... McLachlan moderator, Duncan McKellar, Hugh McNeil and Albert Stewart elders. Inter alia compeared Catharine McLean, Arichoman, who stated that she was delivered of a female child on the 15th April 1834. And that Allan McLean, son of Don'd McLean Blaich in the Parish of Kilmallie was the father of said child. She at the same time laid before the meeting a letter from Allan McLean acknowledging having committed guilt with her, and if the birth of her child should correspond to the time he had criminal connexion (with her, which time is not stated) he confessed himself the father of said child.

and a copy letter from Allan McLean referred to in said minute of date 22nd Jan 1834.

Glasgow 22nd January 1834

Dear Madam

I understand that you are in the family way, and that you blame me for the same. I acknowledge my own fault, and should it come on my time, I confess the same, and take you good care to do justice between you and me, as we have to stand at the judgment seat of our Saviour, and give an account of our works, whether good or bad. Therefore go you and give up your time according to Law, and I will be answerable for myself, and by so doing you will much oblige.
Yours ??

Allan McLean

To Miss Catharine McLean, Bellanach

The session having taken these documents into their consideration and after reasoning?? instruct their Beadle to summon the said Allan McLean to compear before them on Sabbath immediately after Divine Service to answer to the charge of fornication brought against him by Cath McLean residing in the Parish of North Knapdale, as stated in the above extract.

Minutes of Kilmallie Kirk sessions at Corpach 12th Mar 1837

Source: Page 15 in Scotland's People, Virtual Volumes, CH2/719/00001-00025

At the Church of Kilmalie the 12th day of March 1837. The Kirk Session of Kilmalie being met and constituted sederunt the Rev Thomas Davidson moderator, Alex res?? Don'd Matheson, Hugh McLean, Alex Fraser & Duncan Cameron elders.

Compeared Allan McLean, son of Donald McLean Blaich, and being solemnly exhorted to tell the truth, declared as follows vis being interrogated as to the charge of fornication brought against him by Cath McLean in the Parish of North Knapdale and his being the father of the child born of her 15th April 1834. Confessed to being guilty of fornication with the said Cath McLean about the time corresponding with the birth of said child, while lodging for a few days at the House of Hugh McLean, Merch at Bellanoch, when on his way to Glasgow, but would not admit his being the father of her child until the said Hugh McLean and a young man who was about the House would clear the woman upon oath. Being further interrogated as to the authenticity of a letter of date 22nd Jany 1834, bearing what purported to be his signature, sent to the said Cath McLean by him from Glasgow, and in which he acknowledged guilt and being the father of her pregnancy, provided it corresponded with his time, admitted the signature to be his, but denied that he ever wrote such a letter himself, or ordered any other person to write it for him. Maintained that he knew nothing of the contents of the paper to which he ad hibited his name and that his signature was obtained at a late hour in a Public House in Glasgow when he was the worse of liquor in company with the said Hugh McLean.

How these details were found

- Fiona Harris (Allan's 3 X great grand-daughter) found these entries in the minutes of the Kirk Sessions.
- It is a remarkable find because the minutes are not indexed and so it is just a random pursual of the hand-written notes which are difficult to read. They cannot be searched, except by parish and date.
- Fiona had no reason to look at the minutes of any particular date or for a particular person or event.
- She just chanced to notice the names of people we are interested in.
- It was like scooping your hand anywhere on the beach and flicking up a family gem which you didn't even know was missing.

1837
March 5
James MacIntyre for the same - Glasgow
Archbishop says we shall be able to do
better by some learned scholars & they
from the Council of their office after being
in fact before them in the Tribunal and
engaged to read some papers to pay
their debt for ordinary time instead of the
Court for or to such delinquents.
Closed with Prayers

March 12
At the Church of St. Andrew the 12th day
March 1837 the Archbishop of St. Andrew being
not able to attend. Present the Rev. John
Dundas Moderator. Mr. John MacIntyre
Hugh McLean Alex. Fraser & James
Glenfield Elders. Mr. John MacIntyre
Mr. John MacIntyre and James MacIntyre
at the Court declared as follows in being
interrogated as to the charges of James MacIntyre
against him by both the Church in the Parish of
North Ayrshire and his father the father
of said child on the 16th of April 1834 - Confessed
five quarters of conversation with the said
Mr. MacIntyre about the time corresponding with
the birth of said child which led to the said
day of the House of St. Andrew & St. Andrew
at Edinburgh when on his way to Glasgow
but would not admit his being the father
of her

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has still with the said Mr. MacIntyre and James
MacIntyre about the House with clear the
Deacons of the Parish being of the interposed with
the Archbishop of a letter dated 22nd March 1837
saying what appeared to be the signature that it
he had had the same by him from Glasgow
and in which he acknowledged guilt and from
the father of the pregnancy provided it were
proved to his father admitted the signature
to be his, but denied that he had made such
a letter himself, or ordered any other person to
write it for him. Whereupon that he had
nothing of the contents of the Paper to which he
at that time was named that his signature was
obtained at a late hour in a Public House & that
when he was the owner of liquor in company with
the said John MacIntyre - Closed with Prayers

At the Church of St. Andrew the 18th day of March
1837 the Archbishop of St. Andrew being not able to
attend. Present the Rev. John Dundas Moderator.
James MacIntyre and Alex. Fraser Elders.
Confessed Paul Cameron son of John
Cameron a schoolmaster and first attempt to seduce
said child in fact declared as follows in that
an affidavit of a parish held on the beginning
of James MacIntyre at St. Andrew & St. Andrew
of her

1837
February 28 and Alex. MacIntyre to compare before them on Sabbath next
after Divine Service, in order to answer to said charge of
fornication, in order to remove every ground of excuse from
himself, even Cameron for denying the fatherhood of Mary
MacIntyre's child, or refusing to answer for its support.
Present the Moderator said before the Court
a letter from the Deacon Clerk of the Parish of North Ayrshire
dated the 20th instant enclosing the following extract -
"At a meeting held on the 22nd of January 1837 the Deacons of North
Ayrshire being met and constituted. Present the Rev. Dr.
MacLellan, Moderator, James MacIntyre, John MacIntyre and
Alex. Stewart Elders. Intra alia Confessed Paul Cameron
McLean Amshorman, who stated that she was delivered
of a female child on the 16th of April 1834, & that Alex.
McLean son of John McLean Belcher in the Parish of
St. Andrew was the father of said child. She at the same
time laid before the meeting a letter from Alex. MacIntyre
then, confidentially having committed guilt on the
part of the birth of her child should correspond to the time
he had committed conversation with her, which time is not
stated he confessed himself the father of said child
and a Copy letter from Alex. McLean refers to the
said minute of date 22nd Jan. 1834 -
"Glasgow 22nd January 1834."
"Dear Mother"
I understand that you are in the family
and that you blame me for the same, I know
not my own faults and I shall do as I can on my
time. I shall be true, and take you God can do
justice between you and me, as we have to stand at
the judgment seat of the Lord, and give an
account of our

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own works whether you order - therefore you are and give up
your time according to Law, and I shall be unchangeable for
myself, and by so doing you will much oblige
Your Son
E. MacIntyre
Allan McLean
The Deacons being taken these minutes at this conference
then and after receiving instruction from the Deacons to examine the
said Alex. McLean to compare before them a statute to
immediately after Divine Service, to answer to the charge of
fornication brought against him by both the Deacons of the
Parish of North Ayrshire, as stated in the above extract -
Closed with Prayers -
At the Church of St. Andrew the 12th day of March 1837
The Archbishop of St. Andrew being not able to attend
Present the Rev. John Dundas Moderator. James
Cameron, Alex. Fraser, Don MacIntyre, Hugh McLean and
Alex. Fraser Elders.
Confessed Paul Cameron Glenking, and
Alex. MacIntyre Corpoint and being interposed, escorted to
tell the truth in reference to the case of Mary
MacIntyre's child, and to declare that they had no
conscience connected with her. Upon hearing
Declaration of Paul Cameron Alex. MacIntyre, James
Cameron, Cameron mentioned in the minutes of the
last meeting of the Parish, admitted his
being the father of the child of Mary MacIntyre being
informed to Catherine in the minute of the
said parish