

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

promise maintenance for the same - therefore
Richardson may not doubt its return to the
people of the same - Richardson & they
from his recollection of him & after seeing
the child before him by the Minister, and
examined the said woman & her
child by the ordinary time & place of the
law - you or I should be obliged
Closed with prayer

March 12

At the Church of St. Andrew the 12th day
March 1837 The Kirk Session of St. Andrew being
met and constituted. Present the Rev. Mr. John
Davidson Moderator, Mr. John MacLellan
Hugh McLean John MacLellan James
Composed Paul Cameron Alexander
McLean Black and being solemnly
sworn the said Session as follows in being
interrogated as to the charges of Fornication
against him by both Mr. MacLellan and
Mr. MacLellan and his friends the father
of the child on the 16th April 1834 - Confessed
him guilty of Fornication with the said
woman about the time corresponding with
the birth of said child, which happened a few
days after the House of St. Andrew
at St. Andrew, when in his way to Glasgow
but would not admit his being the father
of her

He still until he saw Mr. MacLellan and
when it was then about the House would clear the
woman upon rather being rather interrogated as to
the Debitment of a Letter of the 22nd March 1834
before what happened with the signature sent to
the said child, Mr. MacLellan by him from Glasgow
was in which he acknowledged guilt and from
the father of the pregnancy present at the
particular to his house admitted the signature
to be his, but denied that he was the father
of it then himself, or ordered any other person
write it for him - Mr. MacLellan that he knew
nothing of the contents of the Paper, & would be
at all the time when he was in a Public House in Glasgow
when he was the owner of a house in company with
the said John MacLellan - Closed with prayer

1837
March 28

and Mr. MacLellan to compare before them on Sabbath next
the said woman, in order to answer to said charge of
Fornication, in order to remove every ground of excuse from
the mind of every person for denying the fatherhood of Mary
the said child, or refusing to answer for its support.
Composed the said Session as follows in being
interrogated as to the charges of Fornication
against her by both Mr. MacLellan and
Mr. MacLellan and his friends the father
of the child on the 16th April 1834 - Confessed
him guilty of Fornication with the said
woman about the time corresponding with
the birth of said child, which happened a few
days after the House of St. Andrew
at St. Andrew, when in his way to Glasgow
but would not admit his being the father
of her

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Dear Madam
I understand that you are in the family
way, and that you blame me for the same, I know
not my own faults and should it come on my
turn I should be the same, and take you your care to do
justice between you and me, as we have both had at
the judgment seat of the Lord, and you are
account of our

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your works whether good or bad therefore go you and give up
your time according to Law and Duty, & unchangeable for
yourself, and by so doing you will much oblige
yourself
John MacLellan
Alexander McLean

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At the Church of St. Andrew the 28th day of March 1837
The Kirk Session of St. Andrew being met and constituted
Present the Rev. Mr. John Davidson Moderator, James
Cameron, Mr. John MacLellan, Hugh McLean and
Alexander MacLellan
Composed Paul Cameron Alexander
McLean Black and being solemnly
sworn the said Session as follows in being
interrogated as to the charges of Fornication
against her by both Mr. MacLellan and
Mr. MacLellan and his friends the father
of the child on the 16th April 1834 - Confessed
him guilty of Fornication with the said
woman about the time corresponding with
the birth of said child, which happened a few
days after the House of St. Andrew
at St. Andrew, when in his way to Glasgow
but would not admit his being the father
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